

# LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

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## POETRY.

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## AT THY GRAVE.

WAVES the soft grass at my feet;  
Dost thou feel me near thee, sweet?  
Though the earth upon thy face,  
Holds thee close from my embrace,  
Yet my spirit thine can reach,  
Needs betwixt us twain no speech,  
For the same soul lives in each.

Now I meet no tender eyes  
Seeking mine, in soft surmise  
At some broken utterance faint,  
Smile quick brightening, sigh half spent,  
Yet in some sweet hours gone by,  
No responding eye so eye  
Needed we, for sympathy.

Love, I seem to see thee stand  
Silent in a shadowy land;  
With a look upon thy face  
As if even in that dim place  
Distant voices smote thine ears,  
Memories of vanished years,  
Or faint echoes of these tears.

Yet, I would not have it thus.  
Then would be most piteous  
Our divided lives, if thou  
An imperfect bliss shouldst know.  
Sweet my suffering, if to thee  
Death has brought the faculty  
Of entire felicity.

Rather would I weep in vain,  
That thou canst not share my pain,  
Deem that Lethæan waters roll  
Softly o'er thy separate soul,  
Know that a divided bliss  
Makes thee careless of my kiss,  
Than that thou shouldst feel distress.

Hush! I hear a low sweet sound  
As of music stealing round.  
Forms thy hand the thrilling chords  
Into more than spoken words?  
Ah! 'tis but the gathering breeze  
Whispering to the budding trees,  
Or the song of early bees.

Love, where art thou? Can'st thou not  
Hear me, or is all forgot?  
See'st thou not these burning tears?  
Can my words not reach thine ears?

Or betwixt my soul and thine  
Has some mystery divine  
Sealed a separating line?

Is it thus then after death,  
Old things none remembereth?  
Is the spirit henceforth clear  
Of the life it gathered here?  
Will our noblest longings seem  
Like some dim-remembered dream  
In the after-world's full beam?

Hark! the rainy wind blows loud,  
Scuds above the hurrying cloud;  
Hushed is all the song of bees;  
Angry murmurs of the trees  
Herald tempests. Silent yet  
Sleepest thou — nor tear, nor fret  
Troubles thee. Can I forget?  
All the Year Round.

NEW STANZAS OF "IN MEMORIAM." — Every student of Tennyson will learn with surprise and pleasure that in the fourth volume of the Library Edition of the works of the Poet-Laureate, some additional stanzas, now published for the first time, have been intercalated between the sections hitherto standing as the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth. The new thirty-ninth section takes up the burden of the famous apostrophe to the yew-tree, which occurs almost at the outset of the poem (section 2). Thus it runs: —

Old warder of these buried bones,  
And answering now my random stroke  
With fruitful cloud and living smoke,  
Dark yew, that graspest at the stones

And dippest toward the dreamless head,  
To thee too comes the golden hour  
When flower is feeling after flower;  
But Sorrow-fixt upon the dead,

And darkening the dark graves of men,—  
*What whisper'd from her lying lips?*  
Thy gloom is kindled at the tips,  
And passes into gloom again.

The line italicized is an allusion to the opening stanza of the third section.      Athenæum.

From The Quarterly Review.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE: THEIR CUSTOMS, MANNERS AND MORALITY.\*

Two familiar lines of Burns' are constantly repeated under an impression that the soundness of the thought or sentiment that dictated them is unimpeachable:—

“ Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us  
To see oursel as ithers see us.”

The prevalent notion is that others must necessarily see us as we are—through a clear, transparent medium, neither transfigured by vanity and flattery, nor distorted by prejudice and dislike. It is altogether a mistaken notion. People are quite as open to error in judging others as in judging themselves; and the point of view they take up for the purpose is far more frequently determined by misleading influences than by the unsophisticated desire of truth. The best intentions, the most earnest struggle for impartiality, are no guarantee for strict justness of appreciation: since we cannot shake off our idiosyncrasy; we cannot, formed as we are, see things or persons with the calm, pure eye of reason. Where, in this world of intrigue, ambition, passion, and caprice, is the admired and envied wit, beauty, orator, or statesman to find the “ithers” who are to serve as the infallible helps to self-knowledge? Is Mr. Gladstone to seek them at the Carlton, or Mr. Disraeli at Brookes’?

It is the same with communities as with individuals, or it may be worse; for in nation judging nation, there is the national character to affect the judgment, and the general as well as the particular bias to be calculated on. Each has a different and ever varying criterion of merit, consideration, and morality. “In Spain people ask, Is he a grandee of the first class? In Germany, Can he enter into the Chapters? In France, Does he stand well at court? In England, Who is he?”† This was written towards the middle of the eighteenth

century; but although the revolutionary changes which each country, except England, has undergone, have extended to social habits and modes of thinking as well as to institutions, their respective standards of superiority remain essentially unlike. Whilst freely admitting, therefore, that the “enlightened foreigner” may afford useful hints or warnings, we demur to his jurisdiction when he assumes to constitute a supreme court without appeal; and the enlightened Frenchman, from Voltaire downwards, is peculiarly open to distrust. His fineness and quickness of perception, his rapidity and fertility of association, his range of sentiment and thought, his boldness and vivacity, nay, his very paradoxes and pseudo-philosophy, make him a most entertaining writer of Travels; but he is spoiled as a teacher, and sadly damaged as an authority, by his vanity, his marvellous self-confidence, his false logic, and his ingrained ineradicable conviction that there is nothing first-rate, nothing truly great or admirable, nothing really worth living for, out of France: M. Thiers, the representative Frenchman, would say, out of Paris.

A Frenchman and an Englishman were fishing with indifferent success in one of Lord Lytton's ponds at Knebworth, when the Frenchman, who had caught nothing, thus addressed his companion: “Il me semble, Monsieur, que les étangs anglais ne sont pas si poissonneux que les fleuves français.” As the conversation proceeded, it appeared that the only English pond he had ever fished was the one before him, and the only French river, the Seine.

Sir Samuel Romilly and a French general were discussing a point of equity law. Sir Samuel Romilly gave his opinion in opposition to that of General S—. “Pardonnez-moi, mon cher Romilly, vous vous trompez tout-à-fait: je le sais, car j'ai, lu Blackstone ce matin-même.”

Nor let any one fancy that the national character is materially altered by the crushing defeats they have sustained, or the unparalleled humiliations they have undergone at the hands of conquerors who, in weighing the ransom, ruthlessly threw the sword into the scale. M. Thiers is already preparing to play Camillus to Prince

\* Notes on England. By H. Taine, D.C.L. Oxon, &c. Translated, with an Introductory Chapter, by W. F. Rae. Second Edition. London: 1872.

† “En Espagne on demande, Est-ce un grand de la première classe? En Allemagne, Peut-il entrer dans les chapitres? En France, Est-il bien à la cour? En Angleterre, Quel homme est-il?” (*Helvetius*.)

Bismarck's Brennus; and no speaker in the debate on the army made a more telling hit than the Bishop of Orleans when he declared that Germany was not a great nation, but simply a great barrack. The same (under existing circumstances) pardonable petulance and irritability will occasionally break out when England and the English are discussed; for the French have not forgiven, nor are soon likely to forgive, our neutrality during their worst hour of trial. "To be sure," observed a distinguished Frenchman to an accomplished and ready-witted Englishwoman of rank, "it was foolish in us to hope better things from a nation of shopkeepers." "These popular sayings" — was the well-merited retort — "are frequently destitute of any solid foundation: *we* have been in the habit of calling you a nation of soldiers." \*

M. Taine, the last Frenchman of eminence who has written fully and freely on England, has evidently struggled hard to shake off the common weaknesses of his countrymen; and if not quite so successful as could be wished in this respect, he has produced a curious and interesting book — a book, however, in which just views and sterling truths are rather indicated than developed, whilst the most valuable trains of thought are not unfrequently suggested by the paradoxes. The spirited English version of this gentleman's "Notes" is prefaced by "A Sketch of his Life and Career," and "An Outline of his Method of Criticism;" from which we learn that he has gone through a capital course of training, and discovered sundry rules or principles which wonderfully simplify the processes of observation and reflection to the traveller. Born in 1828, and a pupil at what was then called the College of Bourbon, he was the comrade and

competitor of four remarkable men — Prévost-Paradol, Edmond About, Sarcy, and Weiss. After taking the degree of Doctor of Letters, he gained the prize offered by the Academy for an essay on Livy, and attracted much attention by a series of articles in the leading journals and reviews, followed by a volume entitled "French Philosophers of the Nineteenth Century," in which M. Cousin was uncereemoniously held up to censure and ridicule.

M. Taine's "History of English Literature," published in 1863, is described as the event of the day and the illustration of the year. The sensation it created may be estimated from the fact that it was singled out by a committee of the Academy, and unanimously recommended for a special prize, valued at about 4000 francs; but when the time arrived for confirming the recommendation, the Bishop of Orleans — the same who gave voice to the prevalent feeling against Germany — vehemently denounced the book as impious and immoral, declaring that the author had alleged virtue and vice to be products like sugar and vitriol — that he had denied free will — that he had advocated pure fatalism — that he had depreciated the ecclesiastics of the middle ages, exalted the Puritans, and (to crown all) pointedly praised the English Prayer-book. The Bishop was seconded by M. Cousin, who eagerly seized the occasion for displaying the proverbial charity and toleration of the philosophic Christian; and the reporter of the committee, quailing before their combined authority, withdrew the recommendation without a word. The injustice of the Academy was in part repaired by the University of Oxford when it conferred the honorary degree of D.C.L. on M. Taine: his principal title to the distinction being the self-same book; which has now taken rank as a standard work in European literature. It is stated to have been the fruit of six years' close study, during which he paid frequent visits to England and collected materials for his "Notes," which were revised and completed after his last visit in 1871.

M. Taine's method — for he insists that it is not a system — is one among many proofs of the irresistible force with which

\* We have read with regret in the "Revue des deux Mondes" of June 1st an article from the pen of M. E. Duvergier de Hauranne, in which, not content with blaming our neutrality, he speaks of the *malveillance* of England towards France in her difficulties. The sale of "Dame Europa's School," (according to the publisher) exceeded 130,000; and as the literary merit of the book was by no means remarkable, this enormous circulation must have been entirely owing to its falling in with the popular feeling of the time. There cannot be a more decisive proof of English sympathy with France.

speculative minds of the higher order are tempted into theorizing. Bentham contended that the credibility of witnesses was reducible to a science. Sièyes, in a moment of expansion, exclaimed to Dumont, "*La politique est une science que je crois avoir achevée.*" If Mrs. Trollope heard aright, Prince Metternich said to her, "I believe that the science of government might be reduced to principles, as certain as those of chemistry, if men, instead of theorizing, would only take the trouble patiently to observe the uniform results of similar combinations of circumstances." \* And what are they to do next but theorize? Just so M. Taine. His royal road for arriving at the essences, the elemental truths, the final causes, the collecting links, of all things, is (to use his own words) "wholly comprised in this remark, that moral matters, like physical things, have dependencies and conditions." Take an individual writer, poet, novelist, or historian, and carefully study his works. They will all be found marked by "a certain disposition of mind or soul, a certain array of likes and dislikes, of faculties and failings—in short, a certain psychological state, which is that of the author." Then pass in review his life, his philosophy, his ethical and æsthetical code, i.e. his general views about the good and the beautiful, and you will find that they all depend upon one another; "you will be able to prove logically that a particular quality, violence or sobriety of imagination, oratorical or lyrical aptitude, ascertained as regards one point, must extend its ascendancy over the rest." What is true of the individual is true of a nation and an age—the age of Louis XIV., for example. Religion, art, philosophy, the family and the State—in industry, commerce, and agriculture—have all some common principle, element, or ingredient—might all be traced to the same moral and intellectual bent or tendency:—

"Between an elm of Versailles, a philosophical and religious argument of Malebranche, one of Boileau's maxims in versification, one of Colbert's laws of hypothesis, an ante-room compliment at Marly, a sentence of Bossuet on the

royalty of God, the distance appears infinite and impassable; there is no apparent connection. The facts are so dissimilar that at first sight they are pronounced to be what they appear, that is to say, isolated and separated. But the facts communicate between themselves by the definitions of the groups in which they are comprised, like the waters in a basin by the summit of the heights whence they flow. Each of them is an act of that ideal and general man around whom are grouped all the inventions and all the peculiarities of the epoch; the cause of each is some aptitude or inclination of the reigning model. The various inclinations or aptitudes of the central personage balance, harmonize, temper each other under some liking, or dominant faculty, because it is the same spirit and the same heart which have thought, prayed, imagined, and acted; because it is the same general situation and the same innate nature which have fashioned and governed the separate and diverse works; because it is the same seal which is differently stamped on differing matters. None of these imprints can alter without leading to an alteration in the others, because if one change it is owing to a change in the seal."

All this sounds very ingenious and very eloquent, but we do not see what good can be fairly expected to come of it, unless, as suggested by Mr. Rae, it should induce a nicer observation and more careful estimate of facts. What Condillac said of rules is applicable to M. Taine's method or system: like the parapet of a bridge, it may hinder a person from falling into the river, but will not help him on his way. Indeed it is more likely to lure him out of it in will-o'-the-wisp fashion and land him in a slough; for the odds are that he will draw on his imagination for his dependencies and conditions; that the facts will be made to fit the theory, instead of the theory being based upon the facts; that he will take for granted the connecting link or family likeness between the sermon and the compliment, the religious argument, the maxim of versification, and the elms.

It will be seen, as we proceed, that M. Taine attributes many points of national character, good, bad, and indifferent, to the same cause as the exuberant growth and rich foliage of our trees: that he accounts on the same principle for the large feet of our women and the intemperance

\* "Vienna and the Austrians," vol. ii. p. 11.

of our men. But for a Frenchman with a theory, he is a miracle of impartiality, acuteness, and good sense; and we may say of the English life depicted in his pages what the Merryman in the Prologue to "Faust" says of human life: "Every one lives it; to not many is it known; and seize it where you will, it is interesting." We may take up M. Taine at any stage of his progress, or we may begin with him at the beginning; steam with him up the Thames, and arrive with him on a cold foggy morning at London Bridge.

Sir Walter Scott states incidentally, in one of his novels, that much of the knowledge of life and character displayed in them is owing to his habit of talking freely with fellow travellers, whether he had any previous acquaintance with them or not. M. Taine has the same habit. The first conversation he notes down is with an Englishman of the middle class, "son of a merchant I should suppose; he does not know French, German, or Italian; he is not altogether a gentleman — twenty-five years of age; sneering, decided, incisive face; — he has made for his amusement and instruction a trip lasting twelve months, and is returning from India and from Australia." He is from Liverpool, and after laying down authoritatively that a family that does not keep a carriage may live comfortably there upon three or four hundred a year, goes on to say that "one must marry, that is a matter of course;" and that he hopes to be married within a year or two; adding with commendable caution — "It is better, however, to remain a bachelor if one does not meet the person with whom one desires to pass one's whole life;" "but" — plucking up spirit — "one always meets with her, the only thing is not to let the chance slip." A dowry he declares to be unnecessary: "It is natural and even pleasant to undertake the charge of a portionless wife and of a family." Moral: "It is clear to me" (*loquitur* M. Taine) "that their happiness (the happiness of Englishmen) consists in being at home at six in the evening with a pleasing attached wife, having four or five children on their knees, and respectful domestics." And by no means a bad notion of happiness either; but the deduction from such slender premises reminds us of our friend at Knebworth founding conclusions on the river and the pond. The response of the Liverpool oracle as to morals is somewhat mystical: —

"Of all the countries this Englishman has

seen, England is the most moral. Still, in his opinion, the national evil is "the absence of morality." In consequence he judges France after the English fashion. "The women are badly brought up there, do not read the Bible, are too fond of balls, occupy themselves wholly with dress. The men frequent cafés and keep mistresses, hence so many unfortunate households. This is the result not of race, but of education. French women in England, seriously brought up in English fashion, make very good wives here." "Is everything good in your country?" "No; the national and horrible vice is drunkenness. A man who earns 20s. a week drinks ten of them. Add to this improvidence, stoppage of work, and poverty."

M. Taine says of this interlocutor, "He is a talkative fellow, devoid of affected seriousness. Two other Englishmen with whom I conversed in the boat are like unto him." He was a talkative fellow, who talked loosely and carelessly. What could he, not knowing French, know about French women? or what weight is to be attached to the sweeping statement that a man who earns twenty shillings a week drinks ten of them?

"Other figures in the boat. Two young couples who remain on deck covered with wrappings under umbrellas. A long downpour has begun; they remain seated; in the end they were drenched like ducks. This was in order that husband and wife should not be separated by going below to the cabins.

"Another young wife suffered much from sea-sickness; her husband, who had the look of a merchant's clerk, took her in his arms, supported, tried to read to her, tended her with a freedom and expression of infinite tenderness.

"Two young girls of fifteen and sixteen, who speak German and French exceedingly well and without accent, large restless eyes, large white teeth; they chatter and laugh with perfect unconstraint, with admirable petulance of friendly gaiety; not the slightest trace of coquetry, none of our nice little tricks which have been learned and done on purpose; they never think about the onlookers."

"A lady of forty in spectacles beside her husband, in a worn-out dress, with relics of feminine ornaments, extraordinary teeth in the style of tusks, very serious and most ludicrous; a Frenchwoman, even middle-aged, never forgets to adjust herself — to arrange her dress.

"Patience and phlegm of a tall dry Englishman, who has not moved from the seat, has taken but a single turn, who has spoken to no one, who suffices to himself. As a contrast, three Frenchmen, who put random questions, make hap-hazard assertions, grow impatient, gesticulate, and make puns or something akin to them, appeared to me pleasant fellows."

We invite attention to these groups; for they are all representative, and each

of them eventually, if unconsciously, supplies the keynote to a chapter or a carefully illustrated and expanded note. That they do so may be fairly cited by M. Taine in confirmation of his doctrine of dependencies; as showing that a competent observer might deduce the peculiarities and tendencies of a people from half-a-dozen examples, as surely as Professor Owen would infer the shape and habits of an animal from a bone.

The first day M. Taine passes in London — at all events, the first of which he makes mention — happens to be a Sunday; and he takes the Continental (we think superficial) view of our mode of observing it:—

"Sunday in London in the rain: the shops are shut, the streets almost deserted; the aspect is that of an immense and a well-ordered cemetery. The few passers-by under their umbrellas, in the desert of squares and streets, have the look of uneasy spirits who have risen from their graves; it is appalling.

"I had no conception of such a spectacle, which is said to be frequent in London. The rain is small, compact, pitiless; looking at it one can see no reason why it should not continue to the end of all things; one's feet churn water, there is water everywhere, filthy water impregnated with an odour of soot. A yellow, dense fog fills the air, sweeps down to the ground; at thirty paces a house, a steamboat appear as spots upon blotting-paper. After an hour's walk in the Strand especially, and in the rest of the City, one has the spleen, one meditates suicide."

In this frame of mind he calls Somerset House a frightful thing; and after contemplating the British Museum and St. Paul's, exclaims: "These spots are melancholy, being the decay of stone. And these nude statues in memory of Greece! Wellington is a fighting hero, naked, under the dripping trees of the park. The hideous Nelson, stuck on his column, with a coil of rope in the form of a pigtail, like a rat impaled on the top of a pole. A swamp like this is a place of exile for the arts of antiquity. When the Romans disembarked here, they must have thought themselves in Homer's hell, in the land of the Cimmerians." This assumes, of course, that they disembarked like M. Taine on a wet Sunday, and took a stroll in a corresponding disposition through the Strand and the parks. "But what is to be done on the day of rest? There is the church and the pothouse, intoxication and a sermon, insensibility and reflection, but no other way of spending a Sunday like this. I observe many doors ajar in the spirit

vaults; sad faces, worn or wild, pass out and in. Let us visit the churches." He visits four in the morning, and two in the afternoon, staying out the sermon in two of them. The congregations impressed him rather favourably. "They come to provision themselves with moral counsels, to refresh their principles. When reading the numerous essays in English literature, and the moralizings of the 'Saturday Review,' one perceives that common-places do not weary them." He is pleased by finding the Book of Common Prayer, "the mass-book of England," on the ledges of the pews; and an anthem in Westminster Abbey suggests that "worship thus understood is the *opera* of elevated, serious, and believing souls." Was M. Taine the Frenchman who, on entering the vault under the great Pyramid, exclaimed: "*Quelle place pour un billard!*"

On returning to his hotel he reads the Queen's Proclamation, by which her loving subjects are prohibited from playing at dice, cards, or any other game whatsoever on the Lord's Day, and the magistrates enjoined to prevent the publicans from selling liquors or permitting guests to remain in their houses in the time of divine service;—

"This order is not strictly observed; the tavern doors are closed during service, but they can be opened, and drinking goes on in the back room. In any case this is a relic of the old Puritanism altogether distasteful in France. *Prohibit people to drink and amuse themselves on Sunday? But to a French workman, and to a peasant, Sunday appears to have been made for nothing else.* Stendhal said that here, in Scotland, in true Biblical countries, religion spoils one day out of seven, destroys the seventh part of possible happiness. He judges the Englishman, the man of the North, after the model of the man of the South, whom wine exhilarates and does not brutalize, who can without inconvenience give way to his instinct, and whose pleasure is poetical. Here the temperament is different, more violent and more combative; pleasure is a brutish and bestial thing: I could cite twenty examples of this. An Englishman said to me, 'When a Frenchman is drunk, he chatters; when a German is drunk, he sleeps; when an Englishman is drunk, he fights.'"

In other words, the only answer to Stendhal is that, if an Englishman were allowed the same liberty on Sundays as a Frenchman, he would get drunk and disorderly: that the primary use of Sunday observances is to keep him out of mischief; and that the French laxity in this particular is an infallible sign of the higher civilization and happier tempera-

ment of the French. To test the soundness of this opinion let us take a wider range: let us extend the comparison to other countries besides England and France, and to other times beyond the present. Let it also be remembered that French Sundays are not invariably fine, nor English Sundays invariably wet; that the environs of this metropolis, on an average Sunday, offer much that is bright and cheering to compensate for its gloom. The shop windows are closed, the streets are not alive with traffic, there are fewer handsome equipages, and fewer people of fashion in the parks. But whatever direction you take in the afternoon, you will see groups of men, women, and children, gaily dressed, and looking as if they thoroughly enjoyed their holiday, which most of them could not have at all if the shops were kept open, and the thronging carriages were driving about, and the usual weekday stir and brilliancy were kept up. Take your stand on London or Westminster Bridge and watch the crowded steamers; or go the round of the metropolitan railway stations and form a rough estimate of the thousands of pleasure-seekers who are starting for Richmond, Hampton Court, Epping Forest, Greenwich, or Blackheath. All the suburban villages and favourite places of resort, for an area of twelve miles round, present the same cheerful aspect. So do the country towns; and that the picture is frequently defaced by intemperance or disorderly conduct, we deny. Follow these groups or couples after their trip or stroll, and you will find most of them forming part of a family circle or enjoying a quiet chat round a tea-table.

The Parisian has his shops open, his innumerable cafés and restaurants, his theatres, and his races; but what proportion of the population are kept at work to minister to his gratification?—nay, are more hardly worked on that day to add to it? If the question were to be decided, without reference to religion, by the greatest happiness of the greatest number, it must be decided against the French; and M. Taine is very much mistaken if he supposes that the English observance of Sunday, as generally understood and practised, is the result of bigotry. It is the result, like so many other English customs and institutions, of a wise compromise—a compromise between those who wish to make Sunday a mere festival, and those who would fain convert it into a Pharisaical Sabbath. For more than a century after the Reformation, the

Continental mode of keeping it prevailed in this country. In one of Queen Elizabeth's injunctions, Sunday is classed with other holidays; and it is declared that if, for any scrupulosity of conscience, some should superstitiously abstain from working on those days, they shall grievously offend. The "Book of Sports" was a proclamation issued by James I. in 1618, specifying the recreations which were allowable after divine service, including dancing, archery, and all athletic games.

It is no affair of Protestantism. Luther's opinion is pointedly expressed in his "Table Talk": "If anywhere the day is made holy for the mere day's sake,—if anyone anywhere sets up its observance on a Jewish foundation, then I order you to work on it, to ride on it, to dance on it, to feast on it, to do anything that shall remove this encroachment on Christian liberty." Knox and Calvin took the same view. "Upon Sunday at night," writes Randolph to Cecil from Edinburgh in 1562, "the Duke supped with Mr. Knox, where the Duke desired I should be." According to Disraeli, the elder, "At Geneva a tradition exists that, when John Knox visited Calvin on a Sunday, he found his austere coadjutor bowling on a green. At this day, and in that place, a Calvinist preacher, after his Sunday sermon will take his seat at the card table." The Scotch Calvinists have gone to the opposite extreme. They hold a Sunday walk to be unlawful; and it was actually proposed by a distinguished member of the Kirk to call in the interference of the police to prevent this peculiarly obnoxious mode of Sabbath breaking.\* In parts of Scotland, consequently, may actually be seen that state of things which M. Taine was thinking of when he said that an English Sunday left no alternative between dullness and intoxication, a state of things to which all England was reduced for an entire generation, and which, transplanted

\* At a meeting of the Edinburgh United Presbyterian Presbytery, Feb. 8th, 1863, reported in the "Scotsman." Dr. Johnston said "He should never forget what he saw when he was in Strasbourg. He had a letter of recommendation to a gentleman in Strasbourg—a good man. He delivered his letter in the afternoon of the Lord's Day; the servant told him that his master was walking with his lady on the ramparts, and he found it was the common custom of the Christians in Strasbourg to walk on the ramparts." Mr. Farlane, of Tranent: "Why did you deliver the letter on that day?" Dr. Johnston: "I can explain that, if it is necessary. It was a work of necessity." His explanation was a halting one, and his delivery of the letter appears to have been deemed the greater atrocity of the two. Dr. Johnston would have found things worse in Protestant Sweden, where counting-houses are kept open and bills discounted on Sundays.

to the New World, was pushed to the *ne plus ultra* of absurdity.

A violent reaction in the ascetic direction had preceded the "Book of Sports." It was preached in Oxfordshire that to do any work on the Sabbath was as great a sin as to kill or to commit adultery. It was preached in Somersetshire that to throw a bowl on the Sabbath Day was as great a sin as to commit murder. It was preached in Norfolk that to make a feast or wedding dinner on that day was as great a sin as for a father to take a knife and cut his son's throat. It was preached in Suffolk that to ring more bells than one on the Lord's Day to call the people to church was as great a sin as to do an act of murder.\* This was at the beginning of the seventeenth century. It was impatience at not being able to enforce their doctrines, or at being compelled witnesses, if not partakers, of profane pastimes, rather than political persecution, that caused the first emigration of the Puritans:

"The pilgrim bands, who crossed the sea to keep  
Their Sabbaths in the eye of God alone  
In his wide temple of the wilderness."

The spirit of the Sabbatarian legislation, when uncontrolled, may be inferred from a few articles in the transatlantic Codes or Regulations collected by Dr. Hessey:—

"No one shall run on the Sabbath Day, or walk in his garden, or elsewhere, except reverently to and from meeting.

"No one shall travel, cook victuals, make beds, sweep house, cut hair, or shave on the Sabbath Day.

"No woman shall kiss her child on the Sabbath or Fasting Day.

"If any man shall kiss his wife, or wife her husband, on the Lord's Day, the party in fault shall be punished at the discretion of the magistrates."

The Sabbatarian legislation of the Commonwealth was severe enough to justify the pungent satire of Butler, if no cat was actually hanged on Monday for killing of a mouse on Sunday; whilst the looseness of the Restoration was a melancholy commentary on the tendency of mankind to take refuge from one extreme in another and haply a worse. Evelyn's description of the Court on the last Sunday but one

of Charles II.'s reign may be taken as a sample:—

"Jan. 25, 1665. Dr. Dove preach'd before ye King. I saw this evening such a scene of profane gaming, and the King in the midst of his three concubines, as I had never before seen. Luxurious dallying and profaneness."

This profanation of the day did not extend far beyond the Court circle. The principle statute still in force "for the better observance of the Lord's day" (29 Car. II. c. 71) was passed in 1678: respect for the Church was as essential a part of the Cavalier faith as loyalty to the King; and both before and after the Revolution, the Sunday at most country houses was got through in much the same fashion as at Osbaldistone Hall:—

"The next morning chanced to be Sunday, a day peculiarly hard to be got rid of at Osbaldistone Hall; for after the formal religious service of the morning had been performed, at which all the family regularly attended, it was hard to say upon which individual, Rashleigh and Miss Vernon excepted, the fiend of ennui descended with the most abundant outpouring of his spirit . . . "And since we talk of heraldry (said Sir Hildebrand) I'll go and read Gwillym." This resolution he intimated with a yawn, resistless as that of the goddess in the Dunciad, which was responsively echoed by his giant sons as they dispersed in quest of the pastimes to which their several minds inclined them: Percie to discuss a pot of beer with the steward in the gallery—Thornclyff to cut a pair of cudgels and fix them in their wicker hilts—John to dress May-flies—Dickon to play at pitch-and-toss by himself, his right hand against his left—and Wilfrid to bite his thumbs and hum himself into a slumber which should last till dinner-time, if possible."

This easy, indifferent, and yet not wholly irreverent mode of passing Sunday lasted through the eighteenth century, and far into the nineteenth. Lord Stanhope, in his Chapter on Methodism, quotes a passage bearing on the subject from the "Life of the Rev. William Grimshaw," who joined the Methodists, and stood high with them. "He endeavoured to suppress the generally prevailing custom in country places during the summer of walking in the fields on a Lord's Day, between the services, or in the evening, in companies. He not only bore his testimony against it from the pulpit, but reconnoitred the fields in person to detect and reprove delinquents."\* This excess of zeal did more harm than good. During

\* Strype—quoted by Dr. Hessey in his Bampton Lectures on "Sunday: its Origin, History, and Present Obligation." These lectures comprise almost everything that can be said or brought to bear upon the subject, and the notes are full of curious information and valuable references. See also Cox's "Literature of the Sabbath Question."

\* "History of England," chapter xix.—a model of lucid compression.

the entire reign of George III., of pious and decorous memory — indeed, till within living memory — lawyers had their consultations by preference on Sunday: Cabinet dinners were most frequent on that day: and ladies of quality gave regular Sunday card parties without reproach. It is related of Lord Melbourne, during a visit to the Archbishop of York at Nuneham, that when his right reverend host suggested an attendance at evening service in addition to morning, he replied, "No, my Lord, once is orthodox; twice is Puritanical." This was long the prevalent tone and mode of thinking of the higher class, who have leaned of late to a stricter observance of the day with the especial object of making it a day of rest for their domestics and dependents. But, out of Scotland, there has been no national backsliding into Puritanism; and our Sunday has been held up to imitation by earnest and able writers in Germany and France. An imperial chaplain, the Abbé Mullois, in the palmy days of the Second Empire, emphatically called upon his countrymen to exchange their "*Dimanche égoïste, scélérat et débraillé, sans cœur et sans pitié*," for "the respectable, beneficent, and humane Sunday of England."

This slight historical retrospect may help to clear away the popular misapprehensions which abound, both at home and abroad, touching the nature and extent of the obligation which the right-minded and reflecting people of England deem binding on them to keep one day in the week free for worship, rest, and harmless recreation. They are no more answerable for the perversion of Biblical authority by the northern Pharisees than M. Taine is answerable for the vandalism of the Parisian Commune.\* To complete the charge of Puritanism, he confounds things essentially distinct: —

"Other traces of Puritanical severity, among the rest, are the recommendations on the stairs which lead down to the Thames, and elsewhere; one is requested to be decent. At the railway-station there are large Bibles fastened to chains for the use of passengers while waiting for the train. A tall, sallow, and bony fellow handed

\* The circumstance that so many of the Peninsular battles, and notoriously Waterloo, were fought on a Sunday, is thus accounted for by M. Esquiros: "Knowing the respect of the English for the rest of the seventh day, the French generals hoped to profit by it in their attacks. I confess that they had not always reason to praise their calculations, for the English troops gloriously broke the Sabbath. They thus justified the proverb current in Great Britain, 'The better the day, the better the deed.' — *The English at Home*, vol. II. 263. The duel between Pitt and Tierney was fought on a Sunday.

to me two printed pages on the brazen serpent of Moses, with applications to the present life: 'You, too, oh reader, have been bitten by the fiery serpents. To heal yourself lift up your eyes to Him who has been elevated as the sign of salvation.' Other tokens denote an aristocratic country. At the gate of St. James's Park is the following notice: 'The park-keepers have orders to prevent all beggars from entering the gardens, and all persons in ragged or dirty clothes, or who are not outwardly decent and well-behaved.' *At every step one feels oneself further removed from France.*"

Here, regard to decency, religious enthusiasm, and inequality of condition, are all lumped together; and the combination is so offensive to the refined, fastidious, cosmopolitan Frenchman that, at every step, he feels farther removed from France, and (like Goldsmith's traveller) "drags at each remove a length'ning chain."

Climate, we have been told, aggravates the evils of an English Sunday, by leaving the unoccupied tradesman or mechanic no refuge but a dram; and climate, we find, is the cause of our ingrained heaviness, homeliness, dulness, habitual depression, common-place unimaginative way of living, and bad taste. Occasionally M. Taine bids fair to rival the traveller who said that Nature had adapted the Irish of the bog-districts to their bogs by making them web-footed. After referring to primogeniture, and the large number of children in which English couples rejoice, as stimulants to exertion, he continues:

"Second cause, the climate; I always recur to this, because there is no greater power. Consider that this humidity and this fog existed, and even worse, under the Saxon kings, and that this race has lived amid them, as far as can be traced, even in its earliest country on the coasts of the Elbe and of Jutland. At Manchester, last winter, one of my friends informed me that in the principal hotel of that city it was necessary to keep the gas burning for five days; at midday it was not clear enough to see to write; the sixth day the fog still lasted, but the supply of gas was exhausted. During six months, and during several days in the other months, this country seems to have been made for wild ducks."

The ideal under this sky is comfort; "a dry, clean, well-warmed habitation; a solid succulent dinner; a chat with a faithful wife, dressed with care; rosy-cheeked children, well-washed and in clean clothes." Given these, the average Englishman believes that all the possible wants, bodily and mental, of an intellectual being are provided for: —

"On the contrary, in Provence, in Italy, in

southern countries, the ideal is lounging in the shade, on a terrace, in the open air, with a mistress, before a noble landscape, amid the perfume of roses, amid statues and the music of instruments. In order to relish delicately the beauty of the light, the balmy air, the delicious fruits, and the configuration of the landscape, the senses have but to expand themselves; here the climate closes them, and, by dint of repressing, blunts them. Take an example in little: a poor person at Marseilles, or at Milan, buys a pound of grapes for a halfpenny, worthy of being placed on the table of gods, and thus he acquires the idea of exquisite sensation. How can you suppose that a like idea can be engendered in the brain of one whose palate knows nothing beyond a morsel of meat and a glass of gin or of ale? Shut out from this path, the man never dreams of fine and sensual enjoyment; he would not understand how to essay it, he is hardened, stiffened, habituated to the exigencies and hardship of his lot."

In this, as in many other places, M. Taine forgets to draw the essential distinction between classes. The well-to-do Englishman may surely aspire to some higher enjoyment than mere warmth and food, although he may prefer sitting in a comfortable drawing-room with a wife to lounging on a terrace with a mistress. Let us confine ourselves, for the moment, to the comparative condition of the lower class:—

"A poor person is not wretched in the South; he obtains the most beautiful and the best things gratis, the necessities of life for next to nothing, so many things which are necessities in the North he does not need: abundance of nourishment, artificial light, fire, a well-protected dwelling, warm clothing, frequent changes of linen, and much more. Here is a painful sight. Nothing can be more horrible than the coat, the lodging, the shirt, the form of an English beggar; in Hyde Park, on Sunday, when a poor family sits on the grass it makes a stain. Possess 20,000*l.* in the Funds here, or else cut your throat; such is the idea which constantly haunts me, and the omnibus advertisements suggest it still more in informing me that 'Mappin's celebrated razors cost only one shilling.'"

Eothen after describing the burial of a pilgrim at Jerusalem, remarks: "I did not say Alas!—nobody ever does that I know of though the word is so frequently written. I thought the old man had got rather well out of the scrape of being alive and poor." This reflection was general, and made under a genial Asiatic sky. Is a Southern beggar a less painful sight than a Northern beggar? or does a Neapolitan lazzarone stand higher in the scale of thinking beings than an English

peasant or mechanic? A sensual animal life, with the unrestrained indulgence of its instincts and its wants, is more degrading than hunger or cold: the call for exertion and the need of self-restraint are improving not lowering influences; and if to have the minimum of conventional wants, to be able to dispense with a well-protected dwelling and frequent changes of linen, is the *beau-ideal* of existence, we must repair, like "the Earl and the Doctor," to the South Sea Islands to look for it. There is no country of Europe where an out-of-door life, with thin clothing and a bunch of grapes or a melon for nutriment, is endurable for more than a limited portion of the year. The working class in our most populous districts, the centres of manufacturing industry, where coal may be had for the asking, suffer less from the cold than the peasantry, including the peasant proprietors, in many departments of France. The scarcity of fuel at Paris, and the resulting amount of privation, are well known. "Nor let it be thought that Parisian gaiety is owing entirely to a Parisian climate. They who are now watching the weather-glass in our land of fogs, may like to know that the Parisians themselves have, in the way of weather, something to complain of. Paris has in the year (on an average of twenty years) but one hundred and twenty-six days tolerably fine."\* The variability of the English climate confounds averages; but it is an admitted fact that there is no country in the world where, from equability of temperature, it is possible to be so much in the open air without suffering from hot, cold, wet, or dry; and the beneficial effects are frankly admitted by M. Taine. He is never more eloquent or poetical than when expatiating on the advantages of humidity:—

"I have paid many visits, and taken several walks. The things which please me most are the trees. Every day, after leaving the Athenæum, I go and sit for an hour in St. James's Park; the lake shines softly beneath its misty covering, while the dense foliage bends over the still waters. The rounded trees, the great green domes, make a kind of architecture far more delicate than the other. The eye reposes itself upon these softened forms, upon these subdued tones. These are beauties, but tender and touching those of foggy countries, of Holland."

\* Bulwer's (Lord Dalling's) "France: Social, Literary, Political," vol. i. p. 68, where the statistical details are given. French taste for external nature was well represented by Madame de Staël when she languished for *la belle France* on the banks of the Rhine.

His enthusiasm rekindles when he takes his stand on the Suspension Bridge on a fine evening to gaze and meditate:—

"There are tones like these in the landscapes of Rembrandt, in the twilights of van der Neer! the bathed light, the air charged with vapour, the insensible and continuous changes of the vast exhalation which softens, imparts a bluish tint to, and dims, the contours, the whole producing the impression of a great life, vague, diffused, and melancholy—the life of a humid country."

At Richmond, again, on the very spot where the Duke of Argyll paused to point out the unrivalled landscape to Jeannie Deans, M. Taine breaks out:—

"A sort of fond quietude emanates from the air, the sky, and all things; Nature welcomes the soul, weary and worn with striving. How one feels that their landscape suits them, and why they love it! Without doubt their climate befits trees, and, besides, they have had no invasion or popular rising to mutilate or cut them down; the national taste has favoured their preservation; olden things have been more respected and better preserved than in France, and among them must be numbered the trees."

But the Frenchman is yet to be born who can dissociate the sublime and beautiful from the artificial or conventional. When Voltaire was told how well his trees looked, he replied, that, like fine ladies and gentlemen, they had nothing else to do; and M. Taine thinks that the charm of flowers and foliage is enhanced by their resemblance to a cluster of Parisian beauties in all the glitter and glory of diamonds, crinoline, and bare shoulders. "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these":—

"They have the tint of a beautiful lady; they, too, are patricians developed, preserved, embellished by all the refinements of art and of luxury; I have had the same impression at a full-dress morning party, before a staircase filled from top to bottom with young laughing ladies in swelling and sweeping dresses of tulle, of silk, the head covered with diamonds, the shoulders bare. This was a unique sensation, that of splendour and brilliancy carried to the highest pitch—all the flowers of civilization and of nature in a single bouquet and in a single perfume."

A French traveller in Ireland, after trying the whisky, sets down: "*Le vin du pays est diablement fort.*" M. Taine finds the same fault with all English eatables and drinkables alike. "All their common wines are very hot, very spirituous, and loaded with brandy. If they were pure, they would consider them insipid; our

Bordeaux wines, and even our Burgundies, are too light for them. To please them it is necessary that the beverage should be rough and fiery: their palate must be either scratched or scraped." He takes no account of the demand for Gladstone claret, which is light enough in all conscience; and he assumes throughout that the taste for stimulants is peculiar to us children of the fog. Did he never hear of the "liquoring-up" of the United States, the *Schnaps* of Germany, or the absinthe-drinkers of his native land, who belong to the same category as the Turkish or Chinese opium-eaters? He is still more severe on our cookery:—

"I have purposely dined in twenty taverns, from the lowest to the highest, in London and elsewhere. I got large portions of fat meat and vegetables, without sauce; one is amply and wholesomely fed, but one has no pleasure in eating. In the best Liverpool eating-house they do not know how to dress a fowl. If you would tickle your palate, there is a cruet filled with pickles, peppers, sauces, and Chili vinegar. I once inadvertently put two drops of it into my mouth. I might as well have swallowed a hot cinder. At Greenwich, having already partaken of plain whitebait, I helped myself to some out of a second dish; it was devilled, and fitted for skinning the tongue."

According to him, the English make up for quality by quantity: "They consider us sober; yet we ought to consider them voracious. Economists say that, on an average a Frenchman eats a sheep and a half yearly, and an Englishman four sheep. At the tables of the eating-houses you are served with a small piece of bread along with a very large helping of meat." He does not say "raw meat," as a Frenchman of the old *régime* would have said; for the French have adopted the worst fault they were wont to find in our cookery, that of serving the meat underdone. A Frenchman, dining with an Englishman, let drop, "I eat a great deal of bread with my meat." "Yes," was the reply, "and a great deal of meat with your bread."

The comparative consumption of animal food cannot be decided by the average consumption of sheep in England, any more than by the average consumption of veal in Germany or of *filets de bœuf* in France. Assuming that we do consume a greater amount of animal food of all sorts, this, again, would prove no more than that the bulk of our population are better off. "Fifty years ago," says M. Taine, "meat was a luxury among the peasants; they ate it but once a week; in winter they had salt meat only. Now, they re-

quire fresh meat every day ; and England, which produces so much of it, is obliged, in addition, to procure it from abroad." If this were true (which, we are sorry to say, it is not) the four sheep a year might be accounted for without any imputation of coarse feeding or voracity. Lady Morgan, who had an antagonistic theory of French appetites, tells a story of a little Frenchwoman at a German *table d'hôte* exclaiming, "*Mon Dieu j'ai mangé pour quatre* ;" which, adds Lady Morgan, was not far from the truth.

The physiological and psychological effects of diet are a matter of every-day remark. Kean's dinner was regularly adapted to his part: he ate pork when he had to play tyrants; beef, for murderers; boiled mutton, for lovers. Byron, seeing Moore sedulously occupied with an underdone beefsteak, inquired, "Are you not afraid of committing murder after such a meal?" M. Taine, therefore, has high authority in his favour when he traces our national character to our carnivorous habits. Adopting some passages from Mr. Frœude, he calls the English "a sturdy, high-hearted race, sound in body and fierce in spirit, and furnished with thews and sinews which, under the stimulus of those great shins of beef, their common diet, were the wonder of the age:

"Invariably, by friend and foe alike, the English are described as the fiercest people in all Europe (the English wild beasts, Benvenuto Cellini calls them), and this great physical power they owed to the profuse abundance in which they lived, and the soldiers' training in which every man of them was bred from childhood."

The Bishop of Peterborough was not afraid to declare from the Episcopal Bench in the House of Lords that, if driven to the alternative, he would rather that the people were free than sober. An Englishman with whom M. Taine conversed at "the Derby," disapproved of temperance societies, vowed that the race required stimulants, and maintained that even in India, where he had lived for five years, the entire abandonment of spirituous liquors would be a mistake. "Our sailors cannot do without their glass of spirits. We are eminently an energetic people; we require strong meat and drink to sustain our frames; without them we should have no animal spirits; it is on account of this *régime* that our mariners are so hardy and so brave. When they board, after discharging their pistols, they fling them at random on the enemy's deck,

saying that they are certain to find them again after the victory." M. Taine more than half agrees with him: "Certain organizations are prodigal: there are chimneys which draw badly unless the fire be great; besides, the climate, the fog the large expenditure of physical and mental labour, necessitates copious repasts. Mr. Pitt did not find two bottles of port wine too large a quantity to take with his dinner." Lord Stanhope will be surprised to learn that this habit of Mr. Pitt's, supposed to have been brought on by the weakness of his digestive organs, was nothing but a peculiarity of race. How happens it that in describing the English diet with its effects, M. Taine is silent as to beer; which M. Esquiros, an equally well-informed if less dashing and original observer, terms the national drink:

"Beer has inspired their poets, their artists, their great actors: they remember the tavern near Temple Bar, where Swift, Addison, Garth, and Steele met. An English workman who had been engaged for a long time in a wine-producing country, said to me, after describing all his sufferings and privations, 'If John Bull forgot his beer, he would forget his country: but, before he came to that, his tongue would cleave to the roof of his mouth.'

"The English attribute to the use of this liquid the iron muscles of their labouring classes, who struggle so valiantly, afloat and ashore, in factories and vessels, for the power of Great Britain: they even attribute their victories to it. 'Beer and wine,' an orator exclaimed at a meeting where I was present, 'met at Waterloo: wine red with fury, boiling over with enthusiasm, mad with audacity, rose thrice against that hill on which stood a wall of immovable men, the sons of beer. You have read history: beer gained the day.'

He calls ale "the wife of porter," and includes both under the generic term, beer:—

"One of the consequences of this double alimentary beverage is their substitution for bread among the northern people: and we shall not feel surprised at such a dietetic result if we reflect that beer contains, in a liquid form, the same substantial principles which the produce of our bakeries contains in a solid form. The Latin races eat bread: the Saxon drink it."

A Turkish officer who came over to attend the autumn manœuvres complained of headache at Aldershot. An army doctor was called in, and making no allowance for southern constitutions, gave him four grains of blue pill and a black dose. The consequence was he was that utterly unable to take the field, and remained at his quarters, looking very like a sick monkey:

an animal who is no more disposed than a true believer to regard sickness as a kindly dispensation, and always looks very sorry for himself. We suspect that M. Taine was once ill-advised enough to follow a similar prescription, for he says that the medicines here might be compounded for French horses. "If you ask a chemist for a purge, he hands calomel to you; an Englishman often keeps it by him, and takes a pill of it when his head feels rather heavy." Let us now reverse the picture. This combined system of meat, drink, and physic produces calmness, presence of mind, solidity, laconic forms of expression. "An officer relates that an English admiral, after a long fight, forced the enemy's vessel to strike, and received the captain whom he had made a prisoner on the poop with the single phrase 'Fortune of war.'" A friend of the author's writes that his coachman the other day thought fit to rattle down a mews in full speed. He frightened two carriage-horses which were being harnessed to a carriage. The groom advanced, took hold of the bits, and calmed the horses. Not a single word between these men. "Picture to yourself the same scene in France. The taunts of the lackey, proud of his master, the blackguardism of the jealous menial," &c. One would have thought that this picture was favourable to England. But this is not the opinion of M. Taine's friend, nor, it would seem, of M. Taine himself, when quoting the remainder of the letter:—

"That is, my dear friend, what I have seen of most significance in England, and by means of which I figure to myself English liberty. These people have water mixed with their blood, exactly as their cattle are deficient in juice. Compare the gigots of St. Léonard with those of London. That is why they are allowed to combine together, to brawl, to print what they please. They are primitive animals, cold-blooded, and with a sluggish circulation."

They will not even allow that our mutation, of which we eat so much, is better than their own! It is its want of juciness that makes us cold-blooded, and deprives us of the excitability which so advantageously distinguishes the French. Therefore is it that we have adopted a different and lower basis for the moral principle:

"In France it is based on the sentiment of honour; in England on the idea of duty. Now, the former is rather arbitrary; its reach varies in different persons. One piques himself upon being rigid on a certain point, and thinks himself free on all the rest; in the circle of bad actions, he cuts off a segment from which he excludes himself; but this part varies according

to his preferences—for example, he will be truthful in speaking, but not in writing, or the reverse. My honour consists of that wherein I place my glory, and I can place it in this as well as in that. On the contrary, the idea of duty is strict, and does not admit of the slightest compromise."

This makes us, male and female, matter of fact, unimaginative, uninteresting, commonplace; although it may certainly conduce to sundry prosaic qualities, such as constancy in women, or patient endurance, firmness, and intrepidity in men:—

"A French officer who fought in the Crimea related to me how an English battalion of infantry destroyed two Russian regiments; the Russians fired incessantly, and did not lose a foot of ground, but they were excited and aimed badly; on the contrary, the English infantry avoided undue haste, took steady aim, and missed scarcely a single shot. The human being is ten times stronger when his pulse continues calm, and when his judgment remains free."

In the late war the chasseur was a much superior weapon to the needle-gun; but its longer range became a positive disadvantage through the vivacity of the French, who frequently fired away all their ammunition before they had got near enough to take aim. Mr. Kinglake relates that, before the battle of the Alma had well commenced, swarms of French skirmishers were firing with a briskness and vivacity which warmed the blood of the many thousands of hearers then new to war. "A young officer, kindling at the sound and impatient that the French should be first in action, could not help calling Lord Raglan's attention to it. But the stir of French skirmishers through thick ground was no new music to Lord Fitzroy Somerset: rather, perhaps, it recalled him for the moment to old times in Estremadura and Castile, when, at the side of the great Wellesley, he learned the brisk ways of Napoleon's infantry. So, when the young officer said, 'The French, my Lord, are warmly engaged,' Lord Raglan answered, 'Are they? I cannot catch any return-fire.' His practised ear had told him what we now know to be the truth. No troops were opposed to the advance of Bosquet's columns in this part of the field." M. Taine states that "in the Crimea the French wounded recovered less frequently than the English, because they resigned themselves less rapidly." A passage in one of Tocqueville's conversations with Senior\* throws light upon the

\* "Correspondence and Conversations of Alexis de Tocqueville with William Nassau Senior." Edit-

question whether honour, as understood in France, or duty, as understood in England, is the surest guide, prompter, safeguard, or security:—

"A Frenchman is never bold when he is on the defensive. A few hundreds of the lowest street rabble, without arms or leader, will attack an established government, raise barricades under fire, and die content if they have enjoyed the excitement of bloodshed and riot. Two hundred thousand men, armed, disciplined, seem paralyzed if the law is on their side, and they are required not to attack but to resist. Their cowardice when they are in the right is as marvellous as their courage when they are in the wrong. Perhaps the reason is that, in the former case, they cannot rely on one another; in the latter case they can."

Like Hercules between virtue and vice, or Mahomet's coffin between heaven and earth, M. Taine, dragged different ways by his taste and his principles, is constantly suspended between the agreeable and the good. This is particularly observable in what he says of our women. Admitting their sterling qualities, he cannot get over their rude health, their robustness, their bad taste in dress, their frankness of manner, or their culpable neglect of those arts of pleasing which come so naturally to a Frenchwoman. "As evidences of the state of the streets," he says, "look at the foot coverings (*chassure*) and the feet of the ladies. Their boots are as large as those of gentlemen, their feet are those of watermen, and their gait is in keeping."\* But see them in Rotten Row:—

"Many of the horsewomen are charming, so simple, and so serious, without a trace of coquetry; they come here not to be seen, but to take the air; their manner is frank without pretension; their shake of the hand quite loyal, almost masculine; no frippery in their attire; the small black vest, tightened at the waist, moulds (*montre*) a fine shape and healthy form; to my mind, the first duty of a young lady is to be in good health."

Then why quarrel with them for adapting the means to the end? With amusing inconsistency M. Taine cites approvingly the sneer of Stendhal (Henri Behl) at the English girls who, "tired of staying at home, under the plea of necessary exercise, complete their three or four leagues a day. *In this manner they consume the nervous fluid by the legs, and not by the heart.*

ed by M. C. M. Simpson. A book replete with knowledge and thought.

\* We cannot compliment Mr. Rae on his translation of this passage, which runs thus: "Comme documents, voyez la chaussure et les pieds des dames: bottines qui sont des bottes, forts pieds d'échassiers et demarache assortie."—F. 22.

After which, forsooth, they presume to talk of feminine delicacy, and to despise France and Italy. Nothing, on the contrary, can be more free from occupation than the young Italians; the motion which would deprive them of their sensibility is disagreeable to them. An Italian beauty does not take in a year as much exercise as a young *Miss* in a week." If feminine delicacy were identical with languid sensibility, and intrigue or gallantry the chief business of life, the Italian beauty would bear away the palm; but her indolent, self-indulgent habits not only unfit her for domestic life or intellectual companionship: they render her incapable of deep passion, or of an absorbing or lasting sentiment even of the illicit or forbidden kind:—

"No—'tis not the region where love's to be found:

They have bosoms that sigh, they have glances that rove;

They have language a Sappho's own lip might resound,

When she warbled her best, but they've nothing like Love."\*

Speaking of an evening party at Lady S——'s M. Taine says:—

"Two other young girls are beautiful and pleasing; but too rosy, and upon this rosieness are too many adornments of staring green which vex the eye. But as compensation, how simple and affable are they! Twice out of three times when one converses here with a woman, one feels rested, affected, almost happy; their greeting is kindly, friendly; and such a smile of gentle and quiet goodness! No after-thought; the intention, the expression, everything is open, natural, cordial. One is much more at ease than with a Frenchwoman. . . . The conversation is neither a duel, nor a competition; one may express a thought as it is without embellishment; one has the right to be what one is, commonplace. One may even, without wearying her or having a pedantic air, speak to her about serious matters, obtain from her correct information, reason with her as with a man."

He is prodigal of types. Here is another to illustrate what he calls the chief point, the absence of coquetry:—

"This winter in a Paris drawing-room where I was, a stout, red-faced, bald man, related to a rather great English personage, entered leading his daughter of sixteen; pretty gentle face, but what ignorance of dress! She had dark brown gloves, hair in curls, not glossy, a sort of badly fitting white cassaque, and her waist resembled a log in a sack. All the evening she remained

\* Moore, "Rhymes on the Road:" Florence.

silent, like a Cinderella amidst the splendours and supreme elegances of the dresses and beauties surrounding her. Here, in St. James's Park, at the Exhibition, in the picture galleries, many young ladies, pretty, well dressed, wore spectacles. I put aside several other traits; but it is clear to me that they possess in a much lesser degree than Frenchwomen the sentiment which ordains that at every moment, and before every person, a woman stands with shouldered arms, and feels herself on parade."

The absurdity of requiring that a woman shall be studied, and unstudied, natural and artificial, thinking of herself and not thinking of herself at the same time, never once occurs to him. But as our fair countrywomen think a great deal about their dress, and spend a great deal of money on it, their taste is a fair object of comment; and it is a French remark of long standing, that an Englishwoman resembles the lists at a tournament in which hostile colours encounter and give battle. "I remarked to a lady" (says M. Taine), "that female dress was more showy in England than in France. 'But our gowns come from Paris!' I took care not to reply: 'It is you choose them!'" M. Taine should know that French dress-makers of note, considering their own reputation at stake, leave their English customers little choice in the matter. In his chapter on "Marriage and Married Women," he institutes a fair enough comparison between the wedded life of England and that of France; nor is its fairness affected by the leaning he betrays towards a certain degree of laxity:—

"When the young man has made up his mind, it is to the young girl that he addresses himself first, asking the consent of the parents in the second place; this is the opposite of the French custom, where the man would consider it indelicate to utter a single clear or vague phrase to the young girl before having spoken to her parents. In this matter the English find fault with us, ridicule our marriages summarily settled before a lawyer. Yet C—, who is English, and knows France well, allows that their love-matches end more than once in discord, and our marriages of arrangement in concord."

A love-match is, of course, more likely to end in disappointment than a marriage based on the fitness of things, on compatibility of rank, fortune, connection, temper, age. It has been ingeniously contended that English marriages between persons of distinction would turn out better, if settled, after argument by counsel, by the Lord Chancellor. Mrs. Malaprop's theory, that it is best to begin with a little aver-

sion, is not devoid of plausibility. But, on the other hand, a marriage of reason or convenience partakes too much of the nature of a mere form, and the ceremony sounds like a mockery when the solemn promise to love, honour, and obey, is uttered like a lesson learned by rote, instead of being spoken earnestly and from the heart. The conversation at the Château de Tocqueville happening to turn on French marriages, it was stated that, on the female side, they are generally early; a girl unmarried at twenty-one or twenty-two gets alarmed. The *curés* are the principal marriage-makers. They alone know everybody. A man of eight or nine and twenty may wish for a wife, but is too busy or too awkward to set about getting one for himself. He applies to the *curé*, tells him, perhaps, that he has twenty or twenty-five thousand francs a year. "Well," answers the *curé*, "I think that I have three or four charming *demoiselles* at that price." So the introduction is managed, and the affair is concluded in a few weeks. "The life of an unmarried girl," added Madame de Tocqueville, "is very *triste*. She never quits her mother's side except perhaps to dance, and then does not exchange a word with her partner. She takes no part in conversation; she effaces herself, in short, as much as possible. Were she to do otherwise, she would ruin her chances of marriage."

To the French girl, therefore, marriage is escape from restraint; it is practically her *début* in society, her introduction to the world, in which she is now free to talk and act, to choose her own dresses and companions, to indulge her caprices, to enter into rivalry with the women, and lend a delighted ear to the flatteries of the men. It would be passing strange if, thus occupied and surrounded for the first time, her thoughts should be fixed exclusively on her husband and her home. The English girl of corresponding rank seldom marries till after her third or fourth season; she has run the round of gaiety, and haply begun to tire of it; she has undergone the ordeal of male attention; she has had her passing illusion or more serious interest: *l'amour a passé par là*; and her change of condition not unfrequently implies a considerable amount of self-denial or self-sacrifice, instead of being the "open sesame" to untried realms of fashion and frivolity.

"Very often a lady, daughter of a marquis or baronet, having a dowry of 3000*l.* or 3250*l.*, marries a simple gentleman, and descends of

her own free will from a state of fortune, of comfort, of society, into a lower or much inferior grade. She accustoms herself to this. The reverse of the medal is the fishery for husbands. Worldly and vulgar characters do not fail in this respect; certain young girls use and abuse their freedom in order to settle themselves well. A young man, rich and noble, is much run after. Being too well received, flattered, tempted, provoked, he becomes suspicious and remains on his guard. This is not the case in France; the young girls are too closely watched to make the first advance; there the game never becomes the sportsman."

"Why did you cut me at the morning party at Strawberry Hill?" asked a younger son of a young lady on her pre-ferment. "The sun was in my eyes, and I did not see you." "Yes, the eldest son." This peculiar description of sunstroke will occasionally affect the vision of the fair, and their liability to it is one of the inevitable inconveniences of our system. But, by way of set-off, M. Taine tells us that, in order to marry, it is generally deemed necessary that they should feel a passion; and that many do not marry in consequence of a thwarted inclination." As to the men:—

"Every Englishman has a bit of romance in his heart with regard to marriage; he pictures a home with the wife of his choice, domestic talk, children; there his little universe is enclosed, all his own; so long as he does not have it, he is dissatisfied, being in this matter the reverse of a Frenchman, to whom marriage is generally an end, a makeshift."

M. Taine was assured that, when an Englishman is in love, he is capable of anything: that Thackeray's Major Dobbin, who waits fifteen years without hope, because for him there is only one woman in the world, was drawn from the life: that there were and are numbers of young men like him:—

"This causes silent rendings of the heart and long inner tragedies. Numbers of young men experience it; and the protracted chastity, the habits of taciturn concentration, a capacity for emotion greater and less scattered than among us, carries their passions to the extreme. Frequently it ends in nothing, because they are not beloved, or because the disparity of rank is too great, or because they have not money enough wherewith to maintain a family—a very costly thing here. Then they become half insane; travel to distract their minds, proceed to the ends of the earth. One who was mentioned to me, very distinguished, was supplanted by a titled rival; during two years apprehensions were felt for his reason. He went to China and to Australia; at present he occupies a high post, he has been made a baronet, he presides over

important business, but he is unmarried; from time to time he steals off, makes a journey on foot, in order to be alone and not to have any one to converse with."

So marked a difference in the matrimonial tie at starting must tell materially on the after-life of the parties, and the tie will naturally be deemed most binding in the country where it has been eagerly sought as a blessing instead of being coldly accepted as a makeshift. In England, consequently, "marriage is encompassed with profound respect, and, as regards this matter, opinion is unbending: it is quite sufficient to read books, newspapers, romances, comic journals; adultery is never excused; even in the latitude of intimate conversations between man and man it is always held up as a crime." In France, the exact contrary is the fact: marriage is the never-failing subject of jocularly; in the novel, the play, the opera, the vaudeville, the plot invariably turns on matrimonial infidelity, the deceived husband being held up to ridicule, the false wife to envy and imitation; indeed, one does not see how French dramatists or novelists could get on at all if there were no Seventh Commandment to be broken or made light of. It has been the same from Molière downwards; and Frenchmen still quote complacently the grave irony of Montesquieu: "Que le Français ne parle jamais de sa femme, parce qu'il a peur d'en parler devant les gens qui la connoissent mieux que lui." They do themselves great injustice: the national vanity is discernible in the very exaggeration of their faults; the immorality described by their dramatists could not co exist with the bare decencies of life; and we lend a ready ear to the palliation of M. Taine:

"In the first place, these irregularities are not habitual among us, excepting in the case of fashionable upstarts; they very rarely reach the rich or well-to-do middle-class which possesses family traditions. Besides, in the provinces, life goes on openly, and scandal-mongering, which is greatly feared, performs the part of the police. Finally, the Frenchman flaunts that which a foreigner conceals; he has a horror of hypocrisy, and he prefers to be a braggart of vice."

Hypocrisy has been defined the homage paid to virtue by vice; and virtue will be found in a wavering unsatisfactory state wherever and whenever that homage is denied. When M. Taine relies on scandal-mongering as the safeguard of female honour, he unconsciously adopts the slippery doctrine of Byron:

"And whether coldness, pride, or virtue dignify  
A woman, so she's good, what does it signify?"

Besides, so long as what they call the *convenances* are observed, there is no scandal; and the standard of conduct both in town and country will always be more or less modified by the drama and light literature, the tone and spirit of the day. M. Taine's estimate of the analogous state of things in England must also be taken with some grains of allowance:

"Breaches occur, of which I shall speak later, among the class of tradesmen; and in the lower order of the nobility which is fashionable, travels, and copies Continental manners. But in the mass of the nation, among well brought up persons in the great world, the wives are almost always faithful. C— tells me that I might remain here for eighteen months, and visit all the drawing-rooms, without meeting an exception, *one only is cited among the highest class*. More such cases occurred fifty years ago, in the time of Byron and Alfieri; since then, opinion has become severe, and the Queen has laboured with all her might in this direction, firstly, by her example, secondly by her influence; she excludes ladies of doubtful reputation from her Court; the extreme urgency and pressure of affairs were needed during the Crimean war for her to tolerate under the same roof with her, at Windsor, a statesman known as a profligate."

The frequent appearance of persons of inferior rank in the Divorce Court has given foreigners an erroneous notion of the commercial classes in England, by whom, as also by the whole of the middle class, the matrimonial tie is held in high respect. When they break loose, it is by coarse profligacy. They are wholly guiltless of gallantry; and a plot turning on the intrigues of shopkeepers with each other's wives, which sounds so natural and probable when the scene is laid in the Rue de la Paix, would be declared incongruous and preposterous if the "*dramatis personæ*" were domiciled in Cheapside.

The Queen's married life was a moral lesson and an elevating, improving picture in itself. During the best part of a generation it worked wonders, and its influence extended far beyond the circle which is more or less compelled to follow the lead of the Court. But, of late years, there have been symptoms of a relapse. Temptations and irregular tendencies must always abound amidst the idleness and satiety of a rich, luxurious metropolis; the example of imperial Paris did harm; the vanity of dress was never more baneful than now; and if M. Taine were to spend eighteen months in searching London drawingrooms for an erring spouse, he

would be more successful than Diogenes when searching Athens for an honest man. The "fast" girl has been discovered or sprung up: and Byron's "*drapery misses*"\* have been outdone by drapery dames. There is a scene in "*Les Esclaves de Paris*," in which the famous dressmaker W— is holding court. A married woman, deep in his books, exclaims in agony, "*Mais mon mari ne payera jamais*," "*Bien, un autre payera pour lui*." We regret to say that this expedient of the *autre* is not confined to Paris.

On being told, in 1814, at Paris that a lady whom he had formerly known was no longer received in society, Mackintosh remarks, "I really should like to know what her offence could be." We really should like to know what the solitary exception cited to M. Taine could have done to merit her painful pre-eminence. To us she is a mythical personage; so is the profligate statesman whom the Queen tolerated at Windsor during the Crimean war; so is the heartbroken baronet who, after vainly trying China and Australia, takes refuge in solitary pedestrianism. The distinction drawn between the lower order of nobility and the higher is fanciful.

"Another guarantee [continues M. Taine] is the dread of publicity and of the newspapers. On this head our free and rakish manners grievously offend them. C— related to me that, in a Parisian circle, he heard a man of the world observe to another, 'Is it true, then, that your wife has got a lover?' This remark he considers monstrous; and he is right. A book like Balzac's '*Physiologie du Mariage*' would give great offence; perhaps the author would be prosecuted by the Society for the Suppression of Vice."

Society must be in a curious state where any doubt could be raised as to the taste or propriety of the remark declared monstrous by C—, or where Balzac's "*Physiologie du Mariage*" could be deemed permissible reading for women. Its cold, hard, cynical materialism is yet more revolting than its indecency. One of the maxims is, "*Avant de se marier, on doit avoir au moins disséqué une femme*." But French novels of an extremely objectionable tone and tendency have found their way into English boudoirs; and it is the highest English aristocracy that supplies the crowded and applauding public for "*Madame attend Monsieur*" and "*La Grande Duchesse*." The broad general conclusion at which M. Taine arrives, after

\* See "*Don Juan*," canto xi. st. 49, and note.

tossing the subject to and fro, blowing hot and cold on it, and placing it in every variety of light, is thus expressed:—

"Generally an Englishwoman is more thoroughly beautiful and healthy than a Frenchwoman. The principal cause of this is the hygiene; the children ride on horseback, are much in the open air, do not dine with their parents, do not eat sweetmeats. Moreover, the nerves are less excited, and the temperament is calmer, more enduring, less exacting; what is the most wearing in these days, are incessant and unsatisfied desires.

"On the other hand, the Englishwoman is less agreeable; she does not dress for her husband, she does not know how to make a pretty woman of herself; she has no talent for rendering herself fascinating and enticing at home; she is unacquainted with a number of fine and delicate graces; she considers it unworthy of her to employ minor means for re-awakening love or fondness; more frequently still she is not clever enough to invent them. She puts on handsome new dresses, is most careful about cleanliness, but nothing more; she is not attractive; one soon wearies beside her. Fancy a very beautiful pink peach, slightly juicy, and alongside of it a perfumed strawberry full of flavour."

But let us look a little closer at the perfumed strawberry: let us see if there is not a small maggot at the core:

"medio de fonte leporum  
Surgit amari aliquid quod in ipsis floribus angat."

"There is a small piece now [1834] acting at one of the minor theatres called 'Pourquoi.' It is very popular; everybody goes to see it, and says, 'It is so true.' What tale lies hid under this mysterious title? There are two married friends living together. The wife of one is charming, always ready to obey and to oblige; her husband's will is her law. Nothing puts her out of humour. This couple live on the best of terms, and the husband is as happy as husband can desire to be.—Now for the other pair! Here is a continual wrangling and dispute. The wife will have her own way in the merest trifles on the gravest matters. . . . In short, nothing can be so disagreeable as this good lady is to her grumbling but submissive helpmate. Happiness and misery were never to all appearances brought more fairly face to face than in these two domestic establishments. 'Why' is one wife such a pattern of good nature and submission? 'Why' is the other such a detestable shrew? This is the *pourquoi*. The spouse whom you shrink from in such

justifiable horror is as faithful as woman can be. The spouse whom you cling to as such a pillow of comfort is an intriguing hussy. Hear, O ye French husbands! you must not expect your wives to have at the same time chastity and good temper: the qualities are incompatible. . . . This is the farce which is 'so popular.' This is the picture of manners which people call 'so true.'"

It is as true now as it was in 1834, and there is another stock-piece of the French stage from which an equal amount of instruction, with a sounder rule of conduct for both sexes, may be deduced. It is entitled, "La seconde Année, ou, A qui la faute?" The marriage here is a marriage of affection: the young couple had seen each other, and become mutually attached, whilst the family arrangements were in progress. The first year passes like a prolonged honeymoon, but before the middle of the second, the husband indulges a hankering for his old haunts, steals off to his club, and renews his acquaintance with the actresses and opera dancers *à la mode*. A friend, Edmund, seizes the occasion to amuse Madame la Comtesse, and things are looking bad, when the husband receives a timely warning, and soliloquizes somewhat in this fashion: "It's all my own fault, and, luckily, it's not too late to mend. She liked me better than Edmund when we were both suitors, and, *au fond*, she likes me better still. Vulgar jealousy would be unworthy of us both. Strong measures are out of the question. *Allons*, I must be *aux petits soins* again." He sets regularly to work to win her back; no longer lounges into her drawing-room to leave it, after reading his newspaper, with a yawn; lingers round her with marked interest, pays her graceful compliments, and lays the most beautiful bouquets on her dressing-table. This system is crowned with well-merited success; the husband is reinstated in all the privileges of the lover, and M. Edmund, fairly beaten with his own weapons, is bowed out. This piece, unexceptionable as it reads and acts in point of moral, could not be effectively adapted to the English stage, because it is out of keeping with our manners and modes of thinking to trifle with the duties and relations of married life, or to take for granted that infidelity is justified by neglect. Neither would such conjugal tactics have the attraction of a novelty or originality for an English audience. Madame — (at Paris) said, "The English are ex-

cellen: people: when no one else makes love to their wives, they do it themselves." "Yes," added —, "I observed Mr. — (an Englishman) the other evening talking to his wife for half an hour together." \*

Strengthened by the authority of his omnipresent and omniscient friend C—, M. Taine pronounces an Englishwoman to be incapable of presiding in a drawing-room like a Frenchwoman, to be consequently incapable of forming a *salon*: —

"The Englishwoman has not sufficient tact, promptitude, suppleness to accommodate herself to persons and things, to vary a greeting, comprehend a hint, insinuate praise, make each guest feel that she thinks his presence of much consequence. She is affable only, she merely possesses kindness and serenity. For myself, I desire nothing more, and I can imagine nothing better. But it is clear that a woman of the world—that is to say a person who wishes to make her house a place of meeting frequented and valued by the most distinguished persons of every species—requires to have a more varied and a more delicate talent."

The talent in question has been possessed and displayed by many Englishwomen. Lady Palmerston, for example, had it in as high a degree of perfection as Madame de Recamier, of whom Tocqueville says, "The talent, labour, and skill which she wasted in her *salon* would have gained and governed an empire." † The *salon* jars with our habits; we cling too much to the privacy of the domestic circle, and we have no sympathy with the Frenchman exclaiming, "*Où passerai-je mes soirées*?" which it had become a second nature to him to pass out of his own house. But it is customary for women of the higher class to receive visits from three to six on Sundays: these afternoon receptions closely resemble the *salon*; and in the height of the London season M. Taine's friend C— might have taken him to more than one in which he would have found an Englishwoman doing the honours with Parisian grace to a succession of distinguished visitors, putting each of them at their ease, leading the conversation to the appropriate topics, and rendering to all

what was socially or intellectually their due. Such an introduction would have had the additional advantage of showing M. Taine how the dull monotony of an English Sunday may be relieved.

The narrowness of the family circle in England is no less remarkable than its exclusiveness. It is commonly confined to a single branch. Rarely do we see in England, what is common in Germany and France, several branches living together under the same roof; at one time two or three married brothers, at another the parents with their sons-in-law and their daughters, and so on. "We (says M. Taine) coalesce, we hold everything in common; as for them (the English), even when living together, they maintain distinctions, they draw lines of demarcation. Self is more powerful; each of them preserves a portion of his individuality, his own special and personal nook, enclosed, respected by every one. Thus a father or mother is more imperfectly informed than among us as to the sentiments of their daughter, as to the business and the pleasures of their son." Thus Madame de Sévigné writes to her daughter what her son has told her about his mistresses; and M. Taine says that many young Frenchmen of the present day make similar avowals to their mothers, who, instead of being scandalized, are pleased at being made confidants. "B— is of opinion that this is impossible in England: the son would not dare to do it; the mother would be shocked and indignant."

Prince Pückler-Muskau, who travelled through England in 1826, after complaining of the stiffness of the English aristocracy, remarks:—

"Far more loveable, because far more loving, do the English appear in their domestic and most intimate relations; though even here some "baroque" customs prevail: for instance, the sons in the highest ranks, as soon as they are fledged, leave the paternal roof and live alone; nay, actually do not present themselves at their father's dinner-table without a formal invitation. I lately read a curious instance of conjugal affection in the newspaper. The Marquis of Hastings died in Malta: shortly before his death, he ordered that his right hand should be cut off immediately after his death, and sent to his wife. A gentleman of my acquaintance, *out of real tenderness* (was not the Marquis actuated by real tenderness?), and with her previously obtained permission, cut off his mother's head, that he might keep the skull as long as he lived; while other Englishmen, I really believe, would rather endure eternal torments than permit the scalpel to come near their

\* "Life of Mackintosh." By his Son.

† "Correspondence and Conversations," vol. II. p. 203. The rest of the passage is curious: "She was virtuous, if it be virtuous to persuade every one of a dozen men that you wish to favour him, though some circumstance always occurs to prevent your doing so. Every friend thought himself preferred. She governed us by little distinctions, by letting one man come five minutes before the others, or stay five minutes after; just as Louis XIV. raised one courtier to the seventh heaven by giving him the *bougeoir*, and another by leaning on his arm, or taking the shirt from him."

bodies. The law enjoins the most unscrupulous fulfilment of such dispositions of a deceased; however extravagant they may be, they must be executed. I am told there is a country-house in England where a corpse, fully dressed, has been standing at a window for the last half-century, and still overlooks its former property."

These caprices are not confined to a country or a class. The corpse of the cosmopolitan Jeremy Bentham may still be seen seated in the philosopher's chair in his ordinary costume. The Prince complained that "Politics are here a main ingredient of social intercourse; as they begin to be in Paris, and will in time become in our sleepy Germany: for the whole world has now that tendency. The lighter and more frivolous pleasures suffer by this change, and the art of conversation, as it once flourished in France, will, perhaps, soon be entirely lost. In this country (England) I should rather think it never existed, unless, perhaps, in Charles the Second's time." M. Taine leans to this opinion. "So far as I can judge, the English do not know how to amuse themselves by means of conversation. A Frenchman accounts the happiest moment of his life the period after supper, in the society of well-educated and intelligent men. All the treasures of the human intellect are there handled, not in heavy ingots, or in large sacks, but in pretty portable golden coins. It seems to me that these coins are rare in England, and that, in addition, they are not current. They are regarded as too thin." The exact opposite would be nearer to the fact. The fault of English conversation at present is its frivolity, its want of depth or earnestness, the habit of skipping hastily from topic to topic, the fear which seems to haunt everybody of being voted bores if they venture beyond a fresh bit of gossip, a short anecdote, or a *bon mot*. Lord Grenville used to say that he was always glad to meet lawyers at a dinner-party, because he then felt sure that some good subject would be rationally discussed. Lawyers have degenerated since his time, but not more than other classes of professions in this respect; for (except in a few small and select circles) whether lawyers, authors, doctors, bishops, peers, or members of Parliament, make up the party, there is a decided want of what Dr. Johnson emphatically termed "good talk."

"I cannot understand," said Tocqueville, "how your great people, after having passed six months of representation in London, like to erect a little London for themselves in the country. We never

think of filling our country houses with crowds of acquaintances. Our parties are mere family parties, and all our arrangements are meant for ease and comfort. There is no luxury or display in our furniture, no ostentation in our dinners." Senior replies that "in London, where one has to go three or four miles to see one's friends, where few busy men can spare more than one or two evenings in a week, one scarcely sees the persons that one likes best a dozen times in a season, and then perhaps it is at a large dinner, or a crowded one. One can really enjoy their society in the country." The same difference is remarked by M. Taine, who, in addition to the explanation given by Senior, says that the Englishman is hospitable, not only from generosity and kindness, but from *ennui*, from the need of conversation and new ideas. This excites the indignation of his translator, who protests that "neither the word nor the thing is known in this country." Yet we read in Byron:—

"For *ennui* is a growth of English root,  
Though nameless in our language: we retort  
The fact for words, and let the French translate

That awful yawn which sleep can not abate."

*Ennui* is a growth of every clime; and Mr. Rae might as well contend that no one is ever bored out of England, because the word is English and untranslatable. At the same time we see no necessity for any nice analysis of motives to explain why a nobleman or gentleman, with a spacious country house, including fine pictures and a library, and surrounded by well-stocked preserves, should receive a succession of visitors during a portion of the year, and be especially anxious to entertain foreigners of note.

Speaking of the England of her youth, Miss Berry says, "No man intending to stand for his county, or desirous of being popular in it, would have permitted his table at his country house to be served with three-pronged forks or his ale to be presented but in a tankard to which every mouth was successively to be applied. Sofas conveyed ideas of impropriety; and baths, and every extra attention to cleanliness and purity of person, were habits by no means supposed to refer to superior purity of mind or manners."\* Contrast this with Mr. Taine's account of the superabundant luxury of country-house life now: "In my bedroom is a table of rose-

\* "England and France," second edition. vol. II. p. 41.

wood; upon this table a slab of marble, on the marble a round straw mat: all this to bear an ornamental water-bottle, covered with a tumbler. There are two dressing-tables, each having six drawers: the first is provided with a swing looking-glass, the second with one large jug, one small one, a medium one for hot water, two porcelain basins, two soap-dishes, &c. Napkins are under all the vessels and utensils: to provide for such a service, when the house is occupied, it is necessary that washing should be always going on." That inconvenience may certainly arise, as the Englishman said to the Frenchman who, on being recommended to put his feet in hot water for a cold, objected that this was tantamount to washing them.

"Several of these mansions are historical; they must be seen in order to understand what inheritance in a large family can bring together in the form of treasures. One was mentioned to me where, by a clause in the conditions, the possessor is bound to invest every year several thousand sterling in silver plate; after having crowded the sideboards, in the end, a staircase was made of massive silver. We had the opportunity of seeing in the retrospective exhibition an entire collection of precious curiosities and works of art sent by Lord Hertford. In 1848, he said to one of his French friends, greatly disquieted and a little put out, 'I have a mansion in Wales which I have never seen, but which I am told is very fine. Every day dinner for twelve is served there, and the carriage drawn up at the door in case I should arrive. The butler eats the dinner. Go thither, make yourself at home; you see that it will not cost you a farthing.'"

Both these stories have been told of Spanish grantees. Neither is true of any English nobleman. The late Lord Hertford was by no means given to princely hospitality; but the Duc d'Osuna, whilst resident Ambassador at St. Petersburg, kept up an establishment at Madrid, at which a dinner of twenty-four covers was regularly served, and horses and carriages were always at the disposal of his friends.

In M. Taine's animated description of the magnificent domain of Blenheim he mentions "a large stream of water, crossed by an ornamental bridge." This bridge was constructed by the first Duke, and the smallness of the stream suggested the epigram:—

"The lofty arch his high ambition shows,  
The stream an emblem of his bounty flows."

M. Taine's mistakes are almost all upon the surface. He seldom fails to penetrate to the truth when he is investigating the sources of our permanent well-being and

prosperity. He has the imaginative as well as the intellectual grasp, and can take in all the bearings of a time-honoured institution, with its elevating and refining influences, as well as its assigned object or direct practical utility:—

"I have no park, and yet my eyes are satisfied with beholding one—only it must be accessible and well-kept. It is the same with the lives of the great; they perform the functions of parks among the garden plots and tilled fields. The one furnishes venerable trees, velvet greenswards, the delicious fairy-land of accumulated flowers and poetic avenues; the other maintains certain elegancies of manners and certain shades of sentiments, renders possible a cosmopolite education, supplies a hotbed for statesmen."

One of the first manufacturers in England, a radical and supporter of Mr. Bright, said to M. Taine, "We do not wish to overthrow the aristocracy; we consent to their keeping the Government and the high offices to members of the middle class; we believe that specially trained men are required for the conduct of affairs; trained from father to son for this end, occupying an independent and commanding station. But we absolutely require that they should fill all their places with competent persons. Nothing for mediocrities; no nepotism. Let them govern, provided, however, they have talent." M. Taine thinks that these conditions have been tolerably well performed on both sides since 1832. One of his friends knew Vincent, the itinerant orator, and was told by him, "I can utter all that comes into my head, attack it matters not whom or what, except the Queen and Christianity. If I spoke against them, my hearers would throw stones at me." From a similar appreciation of the popular instincts, Cobett set up his first shop under the sign of "The Bible and the Crown." Although M. Taine's speculations on the Established Church partake somewhat of the spirit of Pope's Universal Prayer, they are marked by feeling and good sense:—

"The more I read the 'Book of Common Prayer,' the more beautiful and appropriate to its purpose do I find it. Whatever be the religion of a country, church is the place to which men come, after six days of mechanical toil, to freshen in themselves the sentiment of the ideal. Such was the Grecian temple under Cymon; such the Gothic cathedral under St. Louis. In accordance with the differences of sentiment, the ceremony and the edifice differ; but the important point is, that the sentiment should be revived and fortified. Now, in my opinion, that occurs here; a day-laborer, a mason, a seam-

stress who leave this service to carry with them noble impressions, suited to the instincts of their race, a vague notion of an august I know not what, of a superior order, of invisible justice."

Then what becomes of Stendhal's notion, that in England, religion spoils one day in seven, destroys the seventh part of possible happiness? Surely the sentiment of the ideal, thus freshened and revived, adds to it. "On the fundamental point, which is the moral emotion, all are agreed, and, in consequence, all reunite to surround with assiduous respect, visible and unanimous, the Church and the pastor." M. Taine thinks that this respect is materially enhanced by the social position of the working clergy; by their being gentlemen, which (in the conventional sense) can rarely be said of the working clergy in France. "When you come to our château (said Tocqueville), you will find the *curé* dining frequently with me, and once a year Madame de Tocqueville and I dine with him. A brother of the predecessor of the present *curé* was my servant: the *curé* has dined with me while his brother waited, and neither of them perceived in this the least *inconvenance*."

The complex and irregular construction of our society is a puzzle to M. Taine, as it has been immemorially a puzzle to all foreigners, and (to own the truth) is still a puzzle to ourselves. "How is it (writes Tocqueville in 1853) that the word *gentleman*, which in our language denotes a mere superiority of blood, with you is now used to express a certain social position, and amount of education, independent of birth; so that in two countries the same word, though the sound remains the same, has entirely changed its meaning? When did this revolution take place? How, and through what transitions? If I had the honour of a personal acquaintance with Mr. Macaulay I should venture to write to ask him these questions. In the excellent history which he is now publishing he alludes to this fact, but he does not try to explain it." These questions were put to Lord Macaulay, and he was unable to answer them. M. Taine has devoted some pages to the attempt with indifferent success, although he has not failed to perceive that the word has no fixed and well-defined meaning, being indiscriminately used to express position, education, tone of mind, conduct, bearing, manners, and birth, in conjunction or apart. Thus B— was merely referring to conduct or character when, speaking to M. Taine of "a great lord, a diplomatist," he said,

"He is no gentleman." But Dr. Arnold was using it to imply the rarest assemblage of qualities when, writing from France, he spoke of the total absence of gentlemen, and added, with less than his usual liberality, "A real English Christian gentleman, of manly heart, enlightened mind, is more, I think, than Guizot or Sismondi could be able to comprehend: no other country could, I think, furnish so fine a specimen of human nature." It is a well-known Irish boast that a finished Irish gentleman would be the most perfect gentleman in the world, *if you could but meet with him*.

"Most modern legislators resemble the children who, after having stuck a frail branch into the ground, pull it up every morning to see if it has taken root." This is one of the published "Thoughts" of a statesman who has had the good fortune to see a constitution, which he largely aided in planting, take root.\* The same thought occurred to M. Taine when an eminent French publicist talked of transplanting the English or American form of government to France, adding, "It is the locomotive; it is enough to bring it across the water, and instantly it will replace the diligence." No, we reply with M. Taine, a constitution, a system of government, has no analogy to a locomotive: it is not a mere mechanical contrivance; to copy it is one thing, to acclimatize or assimilate it is another. You may as well talk of transplanting an historic mansion with its hereditary associations and its oaks.

"We admire the stability of the English Government; this is due to its being the extremity and natural unfolding of an infinity of living fibres rooted in the soil over all the surface of the country. Suppose a riot like that of Lord Gordon's, but better conducted and fortified by socialistic proclamations; add to this, what is contrary to all probability, a gunpowder plot, the total and sudden destruction of the two Houses and of the Royal Family. Only the peak of the Government would be carried off, the rest would remain intact."

Charles Lamb was wont to say that there were two historical events which he wished had turned out differently. He regretted that Charles I. did not hang Milton, and that Guy Fawkes did not succeed in blowing up the two Houses of Parliament. As regards the two Houses, he had possibly in view the solution of the problem started

\* "Pensees diverses de M. Sylvian van de Weyer": published in the first volume of the "Opuscules," edited by M. Delepierra.

by M. Taine — what the nation would do in such a contingency. We agree with him, that "in each parish, in each county, there would be families around which the others would group themselves; important personages, gentlemen and noblemen, who would take the control and make a beginning;" that the exploded peers and members would be speedily replaced, and that much the same course would be taken which was taken when James II. fled the kingdom, after throwing the Great Seal into the Thames.

"Thus their Government is stable, because they possess natural representatives. It is necessary to reflect in order to feel all the weight of this last word, so simple. . . . Thus all our establishments, Republic, Empire, Monarchy, are provisional, resembling the great drop-scenes which in turn fill an empty stage, disappearing or reappearing on occasion. We see them descend, reascending, with a sort of indifference. We are inconvenienced on account of the noise, of the dust, of the disagreeable countenances of the hired applauders, but we resign ourselves; for what can we do in the matter?"

M. Taine devotes some pages to aristocratic ascendancy, having discovered unerring signs of it on every side; like the inscription on tins of biscuits and pots of pomade. "Adopted by the nobility and gentry." B—— came to France during the Exhibition, and was surprised at the familiarities of the soldiers. "When a Captain of the Guides was looking at a picture in a shop window, two soldiers, standing behind him, bent forward and looked over his shoulder. B—— said to me, such conduct would not be tolerated with us; we have distinctions of ranks." It was the want of such distinctions that produced the fatal insubordination of the French army during the late war; and both advocates and opponents of the Purchase System were agreed as to the advantage of having an army officered by a class to which the privates could look up. A medical man was mentioned who had declined a peerage. The Englishman who told M. Taine this added, "He was right: no man who has held out his hand for guineas could take his place among peers of the realm." Mr. Rae, the translator, cites this as an instance in which M. Taine has been led into "notable error" by inexcusably ignorant persons. "His informant must have been strangely unacquainted with the fact known to everybody, that barristers not only take guineas, but accept them willingly, and that the more guineas they receive, owing to the increase of their practice, the better are their pros-

pects of a seat on the woolsack and elevation to the peerage. Moreover, at least one member of the House of Lords entered it not many years ago solely because, as a banker, he had handled the money of his customers so judiciously as to have accumulated an enormous fortune."

It is Mr. Rae who errs from not perceiving the point of the remark. The barrister and the banker do not hold out their hands for guineas. The barrister's fee is paid by the attorney to his clerk, and the banker does not personally receive the money of his customers. The merchant and the shopkeeper both make money by trade, but it is the manner of making it which creates the recognized social difference between the two.

After eighty years of political experiment, involving an incalculable waste of life and property, the French, beginning to despair of liberty, are proud of having attained equality — at least that kind of it under which every man claims to be the equal of his superior and the superior of his equal. After nearly two hundred years of settled government, the English have obtained a reasonable share of liberty, but are content to put up with some social anomalies, the shreds and patches of the past; and M. Taine, forgetting all he has said of the softening, elevating, refining influences of an hereditary aristocracy, sneers at us for not placing an artist or man of letters, merely because he is an artist or a man of letters, on a level with the noble and the millionaire. It is not enough that he takes his station by their side when he has won his spurs, or that "a few authors, on account of the moral or political nature of their writings, are considered and esteemed": —

"According to what my friends tell me, the position of the others is lower than with us. The able journalists who write masterly leading articles three or four times monthly do not sign their articles, and are unknown to the public. Properly speaking, they are literary hacks. Their article is read at breakfast, as one swallows the bread and butter which is eaten with tea. One no more asks who wrote the article than one asks who made the butter. If next month the article and the butter are of inferior quality, one changes one's newspaper and but-terman. No journalist becomes Member of Parliament or rises to be a Minister of State, as in France after 1830."

We are unable to see the injustice of not doing honour to the unknown. It is far from clear to our minds that France has gained at any period by making journalism a stepping-stone to power; and we

challenge M. Taine to name a man who has obtained honourable distinction in any walk who is not received on a footing of equality in the most refined circles, provided his habits and tone of mind fit him for blending easily and naturally with them. The fact is, M. Taine has placed too much reliance on the authority of one whose finest veins of thought and observation were alloyed by an unaccountable weakness on this subject. We say "unaccountable," because, besides being a man of genius of the kindest and most generous nature, he was a gentleman by education and by birth. "I had a conversation with Thackeray, whose name I mention because he is dead, and because his ideas and his conversations are to be found in his books. He confirmed orally all that he had written about the snobbish spirit. He said that he admired our equality greatly, and that great people are so habituated to see people on their knees before them that they are shocked when they meet a man of independent demeanour. 'I myself,' he added, 'am now regarded as a suspicious character.' This is preposterous. 'Great people' are shocked when they meet a man who is deficient in self-respect, who exhibits an uneasy consciousness of social inequality of which they themselves are unconscious till they are reminded of it by his constrained manner, his air of mock deference, or his sneer. He is not regarded as a suspicious character, but as a jarring or uncomfortable one. He ruffles their self-placency, is voted ill-bred or vulgar, and let drop. Plutocracy just now is more in the ascendant than aristocracy; but, in the social arena, celebrity and agreeability combined beat both.

In a chapter headed "De l'Esprit anglais," M. Taine maintains that "the interior of an English head may not unaptly be likened to one of Murray's Handbooks, which contains many facts and few ideas." But any passing indignation that may be roused by this comparison will abate on finding what sort of ideas he prefers to facts. After finding fault with John Sterling's letter, (published by Carlyle) from the West Indies, describing a hurricane, for being a pure statement of facts, he says that the impression produced is the same if we consider in turn the journals, the reviews and the oratory of the two nations. "The special correspondent of an English journal is a sort of photographer that forwards proofs taken on the spot, and these are published unaltered." A French editor would deem

himself bound to lighten them, to fling in some clever touches, "to sum up the whole in a clear idea, embodied in a telling phrase." There is a French translation of "Eothen" in which M. Taine's theory is carried out. The translator, thinking his author deficient in enterprise or "slow," has interwoven an affair of gallantry of his own invention, as if it formed part of the original work. This is what M. Taine would call supplying the deficiency of ideas. This deficiency (he says) is particularly remarkable in our English writers on classical antiquity. They are thoroughly versed in Greek, and they have made Greek verses from the time of leaving school:—

"But they are devoid of ideas, they know the dry bones (*matériel*) of antiquity, but are unable to feel its spirit; they do not picture to themselves its civilization as a whole, the special characteristic of a southern and polytheistic spirit, the sentiments of an athlete, of a dialectician, of an artist. Look, for example, at Mr. Gladstone's extraordinary commentaries on Homer. Nor has Mr. Grote, in his great 'History of Greece,' done anything more than write the history of constitutions and political debates."

These are singularly ill-chosen illustrations. Mr. Gladstone abounds in ideas: he revels in myths and theories: he is of speculation all compact. One of the finest and most distinctive features of Mr. Grote's "History" is his appreciation of the spirit of antiquity,\* and the strictly historical portion is surely not confined to constitutions and political debates. Can M. Taine have read either Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Grote? We strongly suspect that this is one of several instances (his criticism on English Painting is another) in which he has framed his conclusions by *a priori* mode of reasoning, or by the rule of conditions and dependencies. But we parted from him in perfect good humour, and (what is more) on the best possible terms with ourselves. We English are the least sensitive and consequently the most provoking nation upon earth. *Populus me sibilat, at mihi plaudo.* Although an exasperated public, in both hemispheres, may be crying shame on us for our selfish indifference when thrones and presidential chairs are rocking and toppling or half a continent is laid waste, we point complacently to our accumulated

\* We refer M. Taine to (amongst others) ch. xvi, "Grecian Myths"; ch. xvii, "The Grecian Mythical compared with that of Modern Europe"; ch. lxvii, "The Drama, Rhetoric, and Dialectics: the Sophists"; ch. lxviii, "Socrates."

wealth, our boundless resources, our unshaken credit, our laws, our liberty, our flag on which the sun never sets, our time-honoured monarchy, fenced round with time-honoured institutions, like the proud keep of Windsor girt with its double belt of kindred and coeval towers. We listen with equal equanimity to reflections on our social habits or personal qualities, especially when the estimate is favourable upon the whole. So long as courage, firmness, industry, energy, fidelity, constancy, elevation of mind and warmth of heart are conceded to us, M. Taine may expatiate as he thinks fit on the dulness of our Sundays, the humidity of our climate, our unidea'd fondness for facts, our unsentimental regard for duty, the clumsy boots of our women, or the portentous consumption of mutton and strong drinks by our men.

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From Macmillan's Magazine.  
CHRISTINA NORTH.

BY E. M. ARCHER.

CHAPTER XXVII.

In the meantime, so exciting an event had come to disturb the monotony of the sick room and engage the attention of the household, that no one, except Janet, had had time to give a thought to Christina, or disturb themselves at her long-continued absence. Mrs. Oswestry had undertaken to break her sister's arrival to the old man; and then, taking his gloomy silence for assent, she had divulged her presence in the house, and asked that she might bring her to him.

It was a strange scene in the shaded room—the old man lying flushed and eager upon his bed; Mrs. Oswestry in her long black dress, outwardly quiet and composed, as she stood a little behind him, yet with the look of anxiety which made lines upon her usually serene forehead; and then the opening door and the little bright-faced woman, with the tears in her brown eyes and the tremble in her voice, who came forward with eager timidity, doubtful of her reception, and yet longing to be forgiven:—so like to the little Lotty he had lost sixteen years ago, and yet so different.

There was a pause, and then he held out his shaking hands to her.

"I did it for the best, Lotty," he said, with an effort; "God knows I did it for the best. It was a terrible blow to me, and I could not forget it. You're come at

last only to see me die; but it comforts me to see you."

And then the little trembling, impulsive woman burst into tears; and Mrs. Oswestry, knowing that now there would be nothing more for her to say or do, had left them alone together.

It had been an anxious day; she and her sister-and-law sat in the oak parlour, more drawn together than they had ever been before, in their mutual anxiety, and even now fearing the effect of the agitation upon the old man's enfeebled frame.

"I am sure I feel it as much as if she were my own sister," said Mrs. North; "it is trying for her, poor thing, after so long a time. He was gentler than I had thought he would be."

"He is softened by his illness," said Mrs. Oswestry; and then they talked on of the change in Lotty and of what she had been as a girl, and waited for her to come down to them, and forgot Christina.

Mr. Warde came in presently to ask if Mr. North would like to see him, and by that time Madame Ricardo had come downstairs. Her father had grown restless, she said; and Janet, who was a less exciting nurse, had gone to get him his soup; and presently she would go to him again.

"Where is Christina?" asked Mr. Warde, suddenly.

It was an ordinary question enough; the only wonder was that no one had thought of asking it before; and yet for some reason or other it startled them.

"Christina! Oh, she is somewhere!" said her mother, nervously; "she cannot have gone far; she was walking this afternoon."

"But surely not so late as this?" said Mr. Warde.

"You will forgive me for not asking about her before?" said Madame Ricardo, fearing that she had shown an unkind oblivion of her niece; "but you know, in the hurry of the moment, and my dear father——"

"Yes, yes; Mary understands," said Mrs. Oswestry, with involuntary un-called-for impatience, "only one cannot help wondering a little; of course she cannot have gone far; but still, she has been very unhappy of late, and naturally——"

And at this point Janet made her appearance at the door, with a manner so basty and abrupt, and unlike to her usual grim servant-like demeanour, that they stopped speaking, and turned at once to her.

"Miss Christina is come in, ma'am," she

cried breathlessly. "Would you please to come and see her? she is lying in the kitchen, and the Lord only knows what's come over her."

They rose simultaneously, and made a little procession after her along the passage, eager and excited, yet not knowing what they feared, until they followed her into the kitchen, and stood still at the sight of Christina.

She was lying on the floor, with one arm twisted round the chair and her head resting upon it. She was just as she was when she came in, still in her damp clothes, but her hat was pushed off and her hair tossed about her, loosened and in disorder. Her large dark eyes had an unconscious look, and her cheeks were flushed.

"She was asleep when I came in," said Janet. But they were looking at Christina, and no one answered her. In the silence, Mrs. Oswestry went nearer, and bent down towards her.

"Will you come with me, Christina?" she said gently; "you are tired. Will you come to bed?"

"No, no, not with you;—no, I can't come."

What was there in the sweet plaintive voice which sent a shudder through the room?

"The great lights coming—coming through the darkness!" said Christina, gazing intently into the distance—"coming so fast, nearer and nearer; they are coming now; they hurt my eyes," she said, and then she put up her hands and pressed her slender fingers over her eyes. They stood silent in their awe. The clergyman, who was in a way used to it, who had seen so many painful things in his life, yet could not at this moment have commanded his voice to speak; even Mrs. Oswestry turned pale. The stranger, who did not know what it meant, shrank back nervously, and the mother burst into frightened tears.

"They are coming still," cried Christina, shuddering, "so fast, so near,—they are burning."

Mrs. Oswestry knelt down and put her arm round her.

"Look, Christina," she said, "here are no lights. Open your eyes and see. You are tired and ill, or you would not see them."

Christina opened her eyes with mechanical obedience, and gazed at her aunt, but with no gleam of recognition.

"I am not ill—not tired," she said, with the soft low laugh of delirium. After that she said no more, but subsided

into languor and unconsciousness; and they lifted her, and carried her to her room.

The subdued gloom of sickness settled upon the White House. People went and came noiselessly, with anxious faces, and spoke together in whispers. The old man was fading gradually away, and Christina lay day after day upon her little white bed; her eyes bright with fever, with no look of recognition for anyone; talking at intervals in her wanderings, in a sweet, low voice, of other days, of the summer and death and heaven, blending together in her unconsciousness the things which make up the mystery, sadness, and sweetness of our life. Her Aunt Margaret rarely left her; for Mrs. North was unequal to much nursing, and her father had his other daughter to attend upon him. Lotty had always been his favourite, although she had disappointed him, and now she was more to him than the others. He asked often for Christina, but he was satisfied when they told him she was not dangerously ill, only too ill to come to him. He was so near to death himself that his comprehension was limited to a vague sense of the coming change, and to a perception of the things he saw and heard. The doctor said he might pass away any day or week, or, again, he might linger on for months; but if he had any arrangements to be made, they should be made at once. It was then that they first thought of sending for Bernard. His grandfather had been in a sort of way proud of him, and then he was his only near male relation. The same letter which told Bernard of Christina's illness brought him the summons to his grandfather's death-bed.

He was sitting in the great office room of Messrs. Bartlett at his desk, among the other clerks, when his letter was handed to him. They long remembered the look upon his face as he read it and crushed it in his hands. He staggered to his feet, and went out into the air. When they heard that he had gone home because his grandfather was dying, they wondered amongst themselves.

"Who would have thought it would have been such a shock to him," they said; "a grandfather is not like one's father, and he must have been an old man."

They could not know that it was not until Bernard had thrown himself into the train, and taken out his letter again, that he remembered to reproach himself for the secondary place which his grandfather had taken in his thoughts. He was fond of his grandfather, who had been associated

with his boyhood and his home, and had that tender unreasonable hold upon his heart which belongs to a long familiar presence; yet his natural grief had for the time been pushed out of its place by the blow he had received. Christina, lying in unconsciousness — lying between life and death! It was cruel; it was a mistake; it was impossible. And then he thought of her misery, as he had often thought of it before, knowing what it was that had done it.

"The cursed scoundrel!" he said to himself, setting his teeth and clenching his hands.

They had not led him to fear any immediate danger to his grandfather; and when he drove up to the door of the White House and saw the blinds drawn, it never occurred to him that, after all, he might have come too late; he had thought that he would be able at least to say some word of gratitude, and receive the old man's blessing; it was only when his mother met him in the hall that he read the truth in her eyes.

"It was very peaceful and quiet; at ten o'clock this morning," she said, drawing him into the study; "we had not thought it would have been so soon; but it was sudden at the last."

"I wish that I had been here. I wished to see him again," said Bernard, with tears in his eyes.

"My dear boy, you could have done no good. He remembered you: he named you just before the end: he said, 'God bless you, Margaret, and your boy.'"

"And Christina?"

Mrs. Oswestry's heart was yearning over her boy; it was three months since she had seen him, and he was all that she had in the world; now, at the moment of her trouble, when she was worn by watching and perturbed and sad, her heart was aching for a caress and a loving word, and it was hard to feel that she was forgotten in the feverish anxiety with which he put his question. It was hard; yet even now there was nothing but pity and love in her voice.

"There is little change," she said; "but they think that the fever is less. She knows no one, but she does not wander in her talk as she did at first. For the last twenty-four hours she has not spoken. They think it is a better sign. My son," she said, with serious tenderness, pressing his hands in hers, "God has willed that you should suffer."

"Forgive me, mother," he said, with sudden relenting and self-reproach.

Mrs. Oswestry asked no questions and made no answer, but they sat in that silence of unspoken sympathy to which words can add nothing.

He felt guilty towards her, knowing in himself that she could not be to him what he was to her. With Bernard it had not been a sudden revelation; the spell had been upon him since the time when Christina was a little, slender, upright girl, with thick waves of brown hair hanging down below her waist; but it was the first time that Mrs. Oswestry had seen its power so clearly; and though she understood it, and recognized the inevitableness of the change, her heart ached over the sense of something gone from her.

They all stayed on together at the White House. Mrs. North begged that she might not be left alone, and the sisters did not like to be separated. Bernard also could not be spared. He undertook all the arrangements for the funeral: he sat with his mother when she was not with Christina; and whilst she was in the sick-room he would wander aimlessly about, not able to tear himself from the place, yet unable to occupy himself in any way. Sometimes he brought out his drawings, but the lines were unsatisfactory, and his faculty of composition had deserted him. Madame Ricardo was the only person who maintained any cheerfulness. Her father's death had shocked and distressed her, but it was now a week since it had taken place; the funeral was over, and her volatile nature could not long remain seriously impressed. It was sad that Christina should be so ill; but she felt sure that she would be better soon. "Girls at that age suffer very much, but they get over it and marry other young men after all," as she said to Bernard with cheerful confidence. Even the sweet-tempered Bernard turned away angrily; he told his mother that it was desecration for her to take Christina's name upon her lips: which was ungrateful of him, for his aunt had taken a fancy to his manly manners and his handsome looks, and would have been glad to have made friends with him. Perhaps her words angered him the more in that they were the coarse and uncalled for expression of a thought which had for one moment flashed across him when he heard that the engagement with Captain Cleasby was broken off, — a sudden thought, which had brought the blood in a rush of shame and pain and recollection to his face, and which yet had set his heart beating with a hope and a longing. It was forgotten now: forgotten in that anxious, feverish watching

whilst Christina lay in her unconsciousness, on the borders of life and death. The two were striving together in that solemn stillness of unconsciousness — striving in a desperate struggle. But she was young; even now the vital power was strong within her, and she did not die. She was called back to life; back to the springs which must awaken hopes in other hearts; back to the summers with their pomps and splendours and their blaze of cruel sunshine; back to the reddening, yellowing leaves of autumn; back to the chill darkness of winter; back to the empty world. She had stretched out her hands to the great Deliverer: the Angel of Death had stood within the room; her feet had touched the cold waters, and then something had drawn her back into the jar and tumult and memories of earth. Her time was not come; she must wait before she could enter into her rest. Was it perhaps that she had not earned it? Was it that her life must have a purer ring and a more perfect harmony before it could make music with other lives around the heavenly throne? or was it that a poor young heart was breaking at the thought that she was passing from his sight, and God had pity, and would not send out His angel as yet to bring her home?

Slowly, as the days succeeded one another, Christina gathered strength. Slowly the consciousness of the present was re-awakened. Her eyes ceased to wander, and rested with a look of recognition upon familiar objects. She was as yet quite passive; she made no effort to speak; she did not answer when they spoke to her; but she watched the gleams of sunlight which crept into the darkened room. She knew that her mother was standing by her bed; she heard the sounds of stirring life in the early morning, and at night she shut her eyes from the flickering firelight and wearily slept again.

Then there came a day when, in answer to the usual question "Are you better?" she could smile and faintly answer, "Yes." It was the first conscious word which she had uttered; her mother started as at a voice from the grave, and would have betrayed her agitation but for Mrs. Oswestry's warning hand upon her arm.

"That is right, my dear," she said in her unruffled tones; "now you can sleep;" and Christina, too languid to say more, shut her eyes though not to sleep. They did not think it strange at the moment; but as time passed on, and she took food and medicine without comment or inquiry, and let the little events of the day — the

gifts of fruit or flowers the neighbours sent her, her aunts presence, and the doctor's visit — all pass unnoticed, even Madame Ricardo began to feel somewhat uneasy.

They thought that it was weakness of body and deadness of mind; they did not know that it was a sickening dread of anything that might awaken recollections, which made her so passive and gave her such a shrinking from exertion. She had known long before this (long at least it seemed to her) the bitterness of the first awakening to the knowledge that the love in which she had trusted was slipping from her; she had seen the death of hope, and suffered the anguish of parting; she had faced it, and borne it with her eyes open: but now she was to feel the dead-weight of a living sorrow, into which she dared not look. She knew that she had suffered; she knew that she had been near to death; but as yet she had not looked back upon the cause. For the present the past was sealed to her. She knew that she had had a past; she was slowly passing out from a dreadful dream; her physical force was exhausted; her mental energies were weak; she had only sufficient strength to remember that she must, if possible, forget. There was a chamber in her mind crowded with memories whose threshold she dared not pass; there was a name she must not breathe and an image she must not recall. She felt vaguely that she was safer in darkness and solitude.

The familiar faces, the necessary questions, and replies, yes, even the sunshine and the blowing winds and all the sights and sounds of earth, would come to her burdened with the memory of the past; that which she dared not remember could not be altogether forgotten. No, not even though she lay in darkness and silence shutting it out; for, nevertheless, as her strength increased, gradually gleams of light found their way into that dark chamber of her heart.

"We must accustom her by degrees to more exertion;" so Dr. Evans said: "has she any friend who could come to her? She might begin to sit up a little to-morrow. At any rate you might draw the curtains and let her see a little more of the world."

Hitherto, in their dread of exciting her brain, they had kept the room almost as dark by day as it was by night. That evening they drew aside the window curtain, so that when Christina awoke she should see out on to the heath, and the bare trees stretching their leafless branches

against the sky, and the hill rising in the distance.

Christina was alone when she awoke. They had been sitting up with her during the first part of the night; but she had slept quietly and they had not been afraid to leave her. It was still early morning when she opened her eyes to the sight once so familiar and now so strangely unaccustomed. A pale rosy light shone through the window and slowly spread itself over the wall before her. Christina turned from it, and a sick, faint feeling came over her. Was this the dawn that she had so often watched, standing bare-headed on the heath, with the morning air blowing about her; which had made her heart beat with its promise of happiness and shone to her through happy tears? Oh that the sun might not shine, that the light might not kill her with its revelations and remembrances! Yet this day must dawn, like so many other weary despairing days, in brightness and grace, sending floods of sunshine over the dreary heath, filling the world with light and glory. Perhaps among all the pangs which strike from without upon hearts wrung by human sorrow, there is none which strikes so keenly as the desolation and the beauty of a dawning day. Christina could no longer hope to remain unconscious. Recollections must return; they could no longer be driven away by physical weakness; they must be encountered in the strength of that heavenly grace for which she in her weakness had striven. She had been tossed upon a tempestuous sea: the harbour lights were shining far in the distance: darkness was around her: and she was sinking: but as in her despair she let go the helm and clasped her hands to pray, dimly she could discern the Spirit of God moving upon the waters.

#### CHAPTER XXVIII.

CHRISTMAS came and went, with its bells and its holly and its merriment; but the White House had nothing to do with these things. Christina was so much better that Mrs. Oswestry had gone back to the homestead, taking Bernard with her; they thought that Christina would soon be able to leave her room, and then the fewer people there were in the house the better. She had as yet not seen Bernard, and for the present they feared to bring anyone to her who could remind her of old times. Her Aunt Lotty was a new element, and she was her best companion, with her chatter and her kindness, which was not sympathy; she knew nothing ex-

cept the bare outline of Christina's history, and she could be cheerful in her persuasion that the poor child only wanted a little diversion, and time and change of scene, to get over her morbid fancies.

"You shall come home with me, Christina," she said to her; this England is a dismal place in winter. You shall come to feel what sunshine is. It is no use to say No, because I will not be denied. If your mother will not come, we will leave her behind. I will wait patiently till you are a little stronger, and then you shall come and see Italy and my little Berto."

Christina shook her head gently, but made no reply. It did not matter to her; she had no desire to go, no strength to resist anything; but she felt vaguely that Italy was a long way off, too far for her to reach it.

"You need not shake your head, Christina," said her aunt; "I am not asking you to go this minute. You are getting stronger every day and to-morrow you are to go downstairs."

So, gradually, Christina came back to the trivial monotony of every-day life; the silence and solitude which had wrapped her round was over. There might be solitude and emptiness in her heart; but people came and went around her now that the old man was dead more often than they had done before, and she must learn to smile in answer to their words, and try to be grateful for returning strength, and hide the aching and the desolation as best she might.

"Bernard is at home," her mother said to her one day; "he would have come to see you before, only we thought it might excite you; but now that you are so much better —"

"I hope that he will come," said Christina, with a faint flush upon her face. An impassable, immeasurable gulf lay between the present moment and the time when she had seen him last: she seemed to have died and to have entered upon a new existence which had nothing to do with the passion and the joys and the emotions of life: these things were already in the far distance: they would live for ever; but she would not recall them; they were laid to rest like a forgiven sin.

Bernard came to her with a tumult in his heart: striding over the heath with a soft wind blowing against his face. It was one of those mild January days which, even in the midst of winter, come to us with a far-off promise of spring. The snow had melted, and left the hillside green; the little streams were flowing once more; the

fleecy clouds chased one another against a pale blue sky: there was a peaceful sweetness in the very air. They had told him that she was better, and he hoped he hardly knew what. Was not all that had passed a horrible dream? Was it not possible that it should be forgotten? Only last spring and Christina had, as he thought, been his. Could not this spring, as it awakened her to life and strength, bring back to her the time when she had known of no other hopes but those she could share with him? He did not put it into words; but Christina restored to life meant the Christina of old times whose presence and whose love had been everything to him.

She was lying on a low couch by the open window. A glass with some spring flowers stood upon a little table near, and an open book beside it. The wind was blowing gently over her head. Her thin white hands were lying passive against the black background of her mourning dress. There was a faint colour in her cheeks; there was no look of pain upon her forehead; when she saw him a smile awoke upon her mouth. But, — oh! why had they not told him? He knelt down beside her and met her eyes; — deep, sorrowful, unimpassioned eyes, which had seen a great agony and had seen it conquered. Hopes and longings died within him; his mouth quivered and his face turned white.

"Bernard," she said, and stretched out one of her hands to him, — and the sight of his misery, even although it still seemed far off to her, brought the tears into her eyes, — "you must not look at me like that. I am much better, but they should have told you that I still look a little ghost-like."

"You must be better," he said, hoarsely.

"Must I? Well, yes, I think so. I have been brought back to life." It was not the triumph of returning strength; it was not a spontaneous expression of gratitude; it was but the indifferent statement of a fact, or rather the calm acquiescence of resignation.

"I believe that I am content, Bernard," she said; "I have tried to be content." Then he felt how impossible it was that she should ever be anything more.

"Christina," he said, "I had not thought — I had not known. Must it never be different? can nothing bring back your life to you? It is not life only to exist: some people's lives, I know, are made up of suffering and sorrow; but God did not mean it. He could not have meant it to be so with you."

"You mistake, Bernard," she said, and then she paused. No one had yet referred so plainly to her misfortunes: they had avoided the subject, as if their words could either take away or add anything to what could not be altered. Christina could not have spoken of these things; but yet Bernard's words brought no change or pain over her face. She was thinking only how she best might comfort him, how she should answer the chord of anguish in his voice and the pleading of his eyes. "It is a new life, Bernard," she said; "I think that perhaps it is difficult for anyone who has not felt it to understand. God has willed that I should live through it. He came to me in the pain. The pain is dying; but He is near me still." She lay back with a patient smile upon her lips, and eyes that gazed as if she saw a vision. The flush of excitement with which he had spoken had passed from Bernard's face; a great pity surged up in him; and in the silence that followed the passion died out of his heart. She had entered into a peace which passed his understanding, yet he felt no longer any desire to bring her back to the hopes and joys and love of earth: to bring her back to earth, he vaguely felt, would be but to bring her back to darkness and misery and the face of death.

He sat with her for an hour or more, and they talked softly at intervals of ordinary things — of his work, of his friends, of the garden at the Homestead, of his mother and their Aunt Lotty. And the afternoon lights shone over the heath and rested on her head as Bernard sat at the window, watching.

"It is good of you to have come to me, dear Bernard; you will come again, won't you?" she said when he went away.

Of course he came again: he came with flowers or books or drawings: he read to her, he talked to her of things which still had a hold upon her heart.

"That boy of yours cares for nothing as he cares for Christina," his Aunt Lotty said to his mother. "It is not many young men that would give up their time and their pleasures for her as he does: have you ever thought?"

"No, never," said Mrs. Oswestry hurriedly; "let them alone, I beg, Lotty. They were always together as children, you know; there is nothing else. It is natural enough that they should cling together now; they are both young, and we are not." She was an essentially upright woman; but at this moment she did not speak with entire conviction; only dreading any indiscretion which might destroy

the freedom of their intercourse or put a bar upon it. She did not, it is true, know of what had been; but she had guessed what he had hoped; she thought that she understood now the desire of his heart. She did not know that all that was past.

The days lengthened: the spring drew nearer, and Christina began again to move about the house. The warm weather would make her stronger, people said, and when it was a little warmer she should start for Italy. Christina did not object; if they wished it, she was willing to go. In the meantime she had resumed her ordinary occupations. She shed no tears; she made no complaints: she moved about silently for the most part; but her sweet low replies were ready, and her smile could be easily awakened. If she sometimes let her work fall upon her knees when memories crowded her heart and filled her eyes with a hopeless longing, and if she lay sleepless upon her bed at night when the moonlight fell across the floor and when the stars faded in the grey light of morning, no one saw and no one knew.

"Christina will soon be ready to start now, I think," said Mrs. North, one day early in February, as she came out into the garden where she was sitting with Bernard. The wind was blowing softly from the west, the green blades of crocuses were showing themselves in the border, the snowdrops were lifting up their heads under the wall. Christina was sitting on a bench in the spring sunshine, and a little smile came over her face when her mother spoke.

"Italy is a long way off," she said gently.

"You must not be so languid, Christina. Dr. Evans is always telling me that all you want is a little energy. It is unkind of you not to feel for my anxiety when you were so ill. If you understood how important it is to me that you should get quite well, you would show more energy about it, I think."

Mrs. North went back into the house, and there was a momentary silence.

"I sometimes feel as if we were children again, Bernard," she said; "do you remember how we used to go nutting in the woods, and how happy we were? You were always so good to me."

"Yes, I remember," he said.

Such recollections had now no pain for him. It seemed to him sometimes as if he loved Christina again as he had loved her then; loved her with the protecting tenderness of those bygone days; as if all the short interval of passion and indignation and misery had been blotted out. He

loved her still, but not as he had loved her a year ago. A great pity and the sight of a great sorrow had thrust passion and self out of sight. It thrilled him with delight to think that she would not be taken away — that they would live in the same world; and as they sat together with her hand clasped in his, it was to him also as if the happy days of childhood had come back when the little Christina was his little love, when the earth was green and beautiful and the rain fell softly and the sun shone; when there was no dazzling light nor great shadows, nor any place for passions, tumults, or alarms.

"You are changed, Bernard," she said; "I know you are changed; but you are very young still."

Yes! he was changed since the last spring; and yet his face was still beautiful in its youth and innocence. He was paler and thinner than he had been; his mouth was graver and his eyes deeper, but those eyes could still flash at times with boyish spirit. He had suffered, he had conquered; and his victory had brought him no triumph; for it was a victory won over the passion and hope of his life: and still his faith remained unshaken; still his trusting eyes looked on, and other hopes arose to take the place of those which could not be restored. Christina would live; and he might join with the blessed gifts of God to bring her peace.

"You are four-and-twenty and I am twenty," she said again reflectively. "It is not so very long since we were happy little children."

"No not long ago," he said; and his thoughts went back to those days when they had wandered among the green undergrowth under the leafy boughs, with the sunlight slanting through upon their heads; when as yet the sky was cloudless and there was no sign or threatening of the dark storm-clouds which were to rise upon the horizon and break over them, shattering their life and their happiness. And now the sun was shining again but faintly after the storm, and destruction was all around them; but yet their youth had triumphed and they must still live on.

#### CHAPTER XXIX.

It was at the beginning of March that the interest of the Overton people, which had for months past been concentrated upon the White House, was diverted into another channel by the return of their vicar and his bride. Christina was to recover, after all; she had been met driving into Overton, and they saw her once more

by the light of common day. They were glad, certainly, that she was not to die; but at the same time, perhaps, they missed a little the romance of the tragedy they had expected.

"She will go to Italy, and fall in with some other young man," they said; "or perhaps she may marry her handsome cousin, after all." Then they went to call upon Mr. Warde's wife, determined to keep clear of the subject. They went to call full of curiosity, and of anticipations which were destined to be disappointed. The little house which Mr. Warde had made his parsonage had nothing new or interesting about it. The drawing-room was furnished with severe simplicity; there were none of the pretty useless knick-knacks which seem to belong so necessarily to a bride's drawing-room; indeed, there was no attempt at ornament of any kind, except a stand of flowers in the window, and over the mantelpiece that little miniature in an oval frame of Captain Cleasby as a little boy, which had once hung over the chimney-piece at the Park. Miss Cleasby herself did not look in the least bridal; she was just the same as she had always been: she received her visitors in the same leisurely indifferent manner with which she had been wont to receive them at the Park; except that her dress was plainer, there was nothing to mark the change. Perhaps not unnaturally, the neighbours went away disappointed and affronted. Augusta's manner might suit Miss Cleasby, though it had never made her popular; but it was quite out of place now that she was Mr. Warde's wife, and, so to speak, one of themselves.

"I never was one to be touchy," so Mrs. Sim said to her husband; "but really she might have been a little more civil. She never said a word about her wedding tour nor anything. I think it is very hard upon the neighbourhood when a couple set up house together without a single pretty thing to show one. I wonder where they can have put away their wedding presents. I suppose they are too good for us. I did ask her something about London and the fashions, but I declare she did not seem to know anything about it. As to her gown, I should have been ashamed to wear such a thing except in the garden; and I had so counted on seeing some of the trousseau,"—so said poor little Mrs. Sim with regret and vexation.

"There, there, never mind, Lizzie," said Mr. Sim, who was very weak-minded

about any signs of feminine distress; "never mind about Mrs. Warde; you shall go up to London next time I go, and look in the shop windows and choose something pretty for yourself."

In the meantime Augusta pursued her way in entire unconsciousness of the hopes she had dashed and the impression she had made. She had chosen for herself, and she was happy in her choice. Yet she felt strangely cut off from her former life. The Park gates were shut and all the windows closed: no one had as yet taken possession of the place; she walked that way one day, and looked wistfully up the approach, and then she glanced on to the White House, and a pang shot through her. As yet she had heard nothing of Christina; she dared not go to the house; she dared not inquire. She felt that that friendship could never be renewed; that that bond had been broken for ever. Her husband had been to see the Norths, but he had not seen Christina; he brought back word that she was rapidly gaining strength, and that in a few weeks she was to start for Italy.

"She does not know that you are in the place as yet, Augusta; her mother and aunt both think that you had better not meet. They never speak to her of the past. They do not wish to agitate her needlessly."

Augusta acquiesced with a sigh; she felt that she had no right to force her presence upon the Norths, and she not only refrained from going to the White House, but also took pains to avoid Christina's haunts; nevertheless, as it so often happens, chance brought about the meeting against which they would have guarded.

Christina had promised that Janet's baby nephew should be her god-child. The little brown-faced creature had been brought to see her; she had looked at it with languid amusement; and now it was old enough to be taken to church. There had at first been no idea of her being there in person, but when the afternoon came it was so mild a day that Christina said she would hold it at the font herself. They attempted to dissuade her, but she was gently persistent.

"It will please them, I know," she said, "and I have so seldom an opportunity of pleasing anyone now."

Thus it was, that when Mr. Warde laid down his book and turned to take the child, it was Christina who stepped forward to lay it in his arms. She looked very pale, but that was perhaps partly the

effect of her deep mourning. Upon the whole she was less altered than he had expected. Yet there was a slight trembling in his voice as he pronounced the blessing.

She was standing steadily; she made the responses quite clearly; she took the child back into her arms with a smile. What was it that made Bernard's heart sink at this moment, as she stood there so quietly, with the little white-robed creature in her arms, and the light slanting through from the painted window upon her head? She had laid aside her invalid habits; she was once more standing in the church, joining in the worship, giving an outward and visible sign that she could once more mingle with the world, that she was one of the great congregation who must live and struggle and pray, not in heaven but upon earth. And yet when she had lain back on her white pillows like one set apart, even when she was still within the sanctuary of mortal sickness, he had not felt the change and the separation so painfully; he had not seen so clearly the change which had passed over the Christina of old times, whose feet had trod so lightly upon the earth, whose eyes had grown bright and eager with a happy pride and a girlish hope, whose heart had been ever singing to itself of visionary delights. She had risen again, she could once more stand alone, but never again as she had stood before.

He watched her anxiously, and when the service was over, he followed her out into the porch. She had sunk down on the stone seat, and he saw that she drew her breath with difficulty. Standing before her, he guarded her from curious eyes, as the congregation streamed past her into the churchyard.

"Are you not ready to come home, Christina?" said her mother, nervously. "It is growing cold, and your Aunt Lotty will be waiting for us. Are you not ready to come?"

"I felt a little faint," said Christina, in a low voice; "it is over now, but I think I will rest a little longer."

"Bernard, she must not see *her*," said Mrs. North, drawing him aside and speaking in a whisper. "She is waiting for her husband in the church. You must go and tell her, and I will take Christina home. Come Christina," she added, "it will do you good to drive against the air."

They had thought that she could not overhear them, but her nerves were on the strain, and her faculties sharpened by excitement.

"I understand, mother," she said; "Mr Warde's wife is with him. We will go home, but I will speak to her first."

It was at that moment that the Vicar, stepping out of the church with his wife upon his arm, came suddenly and unexpectedly upon the group.

The quaint, red-brick porch was filled with the quiet grey light of afternoon; the yew-tree spread out its dark branches against the pale sky, making a background to the girl's slight, upright figure, as she stood with clasped hands, and eyes that shone like stars in the soft dusky atmosphere. Whenever Augusta thought of her, in after days, she thought of her as she saw her then.

The meeting was so sudden that, for the moment, it threw her off her guard; she stepped back, hardly repressing a cry, and gazed for a moment blankly at the apparition. They had all, more or less, lost their self-possession, and did not know what to say or do. It was Christina who, standing there in the supreme unconsciousness which belongs to suffering, was the first to speak, holding out her hand with a smile.

"I wanted just to speak to you," she said, "though it is growing late. When did you come home?"

"Last week — no, rather sooner. We thought we had been away a long time," Augusta said, incoherently; and then she made an effort to command herself. "I was glad to come home," she said, with an attempt at a smile, but still with a quiver in her voice, "though my parochial duties do stand before me in such formidable array. Who was your little god-child? Ought I to make myself responsible too for having the poor little creatures brought up in the way in which they should go?"

Christina smiled faintly, with a vague wonder; seeing the unnaturalness of her manner, seeing the struggle, and but half apprehending its cause: as for Mrs. North, she was affronted, as was natural, at the heartlessness of Augusta's light words.

"Christina, come; it is growing so late," she said. Then Christina held out her hand once more.

"Good-bye," she said; "I must not wait any longer. You will come and see me?"

There then rushed back to her mind the memory of Captain Cleasby's words: "You will let Gusty come and see you sometimes;" and for the first time the shadow of suffering darkened her face; she turned away quickly, but yet Augusta saw it.

"Christina, will you — ?" she said; and

then suddenly her voice broke in sobs. "The church was so hot," she said, as in the silence they gazed at her in amazement; "I am not accustomed to go to church," she cried with a candour which luckily could not reach the ears of her husband's parishioners. It was a poor pretence at an excuse, but it was not without its use; it served to break up the conversation and make a natural ending to the scene. They were all more or less agitated, except Christina; she came forward quite unmoved, and let her mother take her away.

"I wish Walter had not done it," cried Augusta, her tears returning when she was left alone with her husband. "Anything would have been better than this. I did not know it before; why have you wakened up my heart in me? It is making me altogether unprincipled."

"Some people are very strange," said Mrs. North that evening to her sister Lotty. "If Christina had not been so calm, Miss Cleasby, I mean Mrs. Warde, might have undone everything. She had no right to break down before her. We have our feelings too, but we control them."

"Italy will put life into her."

"I hope so," said Mrs. North.

But the weeks passed and grew into months, and still Madame Ricardo was waiting until Christina should be well enough to travel. They always talked of it as a certainty! "When you come back from Italy," her mother would say, as if her return was near at hand: and her aunt would tell her of her home and of all the things that she should see, and Bernard would make plans for coming out to study foreign architecture and see her there. Christina listened to it all with a quiet smile, knowing their blindness, yet loth to dash their hopes. For other hopes had risen up in her at which they never guessed; hopes with which they had nothing to do, for whose accomplishment she was waiting. The March winds were over! the April rains were past. She had waited for the warm weather to enable her to move, and now the heat was too much for her. "Surely the weather was unusually hot;" so they talked, and still thought that she would be better presently. Yet they must know sometime.

The June roses were blooming on the wall, the woods were once more casting quivering leafy shadows on the ground, the sun was blazing upon the white road, Christina sat upon the bench in the shadow of the wall as she often sat now,

with her hands lying idly in her lap, and her eyes wandering into the distance. The golden haze of summer hung over the distant hill; the insects were humming in the quiet air. Bernard came in at the gate with his fishing-rod over his shoulder. He came and sat down beside Christina. Was it perhaps something in her face, pale and still as it was, which suddenly struck fear into his heart? He had taken one of her hands and spread it out upon his own palm. How thin and small it looked! He gazed at it with a sharp pang which he dared not analyze; and kissed it and laid it back again in her lap with a half laugh.

"Some people would be fond of such little hands," he said; "but I shall be fonder of them when they are a little bigger."

"But, Bernard, I think they will not change."

"Why not?" he said, almost impatiently; "What makes you think that? When you come back from Italy ——" he broke off suddenly, and turned from the look in her eyes.

"Bernard, Bernard, it is not to Italy that I am going."

He kept his head turned away that she might not see his face, and forced back the cry that her words wrung from him into his heart.

"Oh, my God," he said, but quite low, so that she could not hear, clenching together in a painful straining grasp the hands in which hers had lain so softly.

"I have thought it for a long time," she went on, "and now I want you to think of it too, that it may not hurt you at the last. Bernard, you have always loved me better than yourself; Bernard, my dearest friend, you will not grudge me my rest."

She put out her hands pleadingly, and laid them upon his arm; but he put her gently away, and stood up and walked from her without looking back. Later he might speak to her, but not now. He stifled the moan in his heart that she might not hear; he turned his face from her that she might not see; and then he passed from her sight, turning the corner of the house and hidden by the clambering roses. He went and leant over the gate which led on to the heath. Later perhaps he might understand it, but not now. Standing in that beautiful green world, with the scent of the roses blown round him by the gentle winds, with the flitting butterflies and murmuring bees passing from flower to flower, with the sunshine on

the purple heather; oh, it was impossible not to cry out against the approach of death! Now that she had spoken, it seemed so horribly near and yet so impossible. It was so natural to him to be happy. He had suffered; he had renounced the desire of his heart; but yet the world was dear to him. This was God's world as well as that other distant visionary land; it was a world full of warmth and sunshine and loving-kindness. He had already given up so much, he had been content to sit with Christina's hand in his and see her eyes light up with grateful affection at his approach, and to know that the storms of passion were over and that she could once more trust him as a brother. This, too, was to be taken from him; everything in which he had trusted. He was so young still, almost a boy, and his heart cried out against the inevitable, saying that God could not have given her back to him only to take her away for ever; no, not for ever, but yet for that long stretch of time which seemed at such moments so unending, during which he must work and suffer and live. God knows she was right, he would not grudge it to her; only he could not understand how it was that he must stay behind. When at last he remembered that she might still be waiting for him, he turned, and, once more seeking in the simplicity of his generous heart to hide his despair and anguish, went slowly back into the garden. She was sitting where he had left her, with the pink and white roses which he had gathered for her lying in her lap, and the green branches of the white blossoming jasmine making a trellis-work upon the wall behind her head. Her sad, appealing, compassionate eyes, which had followed him as he walked away, met his now full of their wild tumult of horror and rebellion, and he saw that the disguise which he would fain have put on could not avail him. She had understood that, even in his madness as he recoiled from the first shock, he would not forget her; his misery was too much part of himself for it to engross him altogether.

She put out her hand and drew him down beside her, and then, at her soft pitiful touch, the hot tears for the first time rose in his eyes.

"Christina," he said, "I cannot bear it. I cannot live without you."

She said nothing for some moments, and when at length she spoke it was not of him but of herself.

"I, too, have felt that I could not; but, Bernard, we always can. God finds a

way, though we cannot find one for ourselves."

"Christina," he said, "if it is true, that thing that you said, — if that must remain, what matter what comes after? You are right. I think I would not, if I could, take from you that which you pray that God may bring to pass. If it must come, you at least will be happy; but . . . we will not talk of it now."

There was again a pause, and a silence except for the rustling leaves and the murmuring summer air and the music of the birds.

"You will listen to me, Bernard," she said after some minutes, "and we will not talk of that just now. We will talk of this world. It is beautiful, and we have been very happy in it. We were happy in it when we were little children, and it may have seemed as if we might go back to those days again; but, Bernard, think that it could not have lasted for ever. Remember that there is a time of sin and misery which I dare not recall; a place in my heart into which I dare not look; remember that there is an unceasing struggle in my soul — links which lie broken, hopes which lie dead, longings ever rising up which must be trodden under foot. My past is not only full of sorrow, but full of reproach. Bernard, God is taking all this from me, and presently you will thank Him too. You have done very much for me, but He is doing what no one else can do."

He understood in part, and yet his human heart still rebelled against the pain and shrank back in trembling fear from the thought of parting. And Christina — she knew that the present was hard to bear, but did she know to what she was going? What was it which had come to her to make her ready to depart, without fear or trembling, into that dark unfathomable future? Christina had so loved the earth and the sunshine and all that had once made her life; he had wanted to bring her back to it, and now she was going where he could do nothing for her, where he could take care of her no longer.

"I see," he said, "I understand about this world, and if you are sure that you will be happier there —"

"God is merciful, Bernard, I cannot be afraid." Her steadfast eyes were even now gazing into that future; he felt, with a strange mixture of pain and shrinking and gratitude, that what seemed to him so far distant was to her already near at hand.

## CHAPTER XXX.

It was about a week later that Christina's convictions were officially confirmed by Dr. Evans. He had not wished needlessly to alarm them, he said, and it was most necessary to avoid agitating the patient. "It was a peculiar case," so he said, making an excuse to himself for his perplexities; but still from all he saw he thought that it was vain to hope she would be able to bear the journey to Italy; perhaps a little change to a place nearer at hand might be advisable. But Christina begged to be allowed to remain at home. "It is not a question of saving my life, you know," she said to Dr. Evans, who thought her composed manner heartless, "and I would so much rather remain quietly here; if only everyone need not know." They wondered at her desire that her state should be kept secret, until it occurred to them that she might dread Augusta Warde's sympathy, or fear that she might reproach herself or her brother. "We have always been a delicate family," Christina would say, tracing back the cause of her illness to any source rather than the right one. After all, it was true that she had a delicate constitution; Dr. Evans had said so.

Madame Ricardo went back to Italy. She had already been long enough away from her husband and her little Berto, though if there had been any prospect of Christina's return with her she would gladly have delayed still longer; somehow the girl had won a place in her heart, and the tears stood in her brown eyes when she wished her good-bye.

"If ever you should think again of coming to us—" she said; and then she stopped, and hurried away without being able to say more.

"Poor, poor Mary!" she cried, kissing her sister-in-law at the gate.

"It is a sad world: why should I wish to keep her?" said Mrs. North; and yet her eyes, too, filled. She felt it to be unreasonable, but yet she would have kept her if she might.

What avails it to tell the old sad story of a gentle lingering sinking to a quiet rest? The hot summer months crept slowly on; they did not see the change until it came. They did not talk of it to friends or strangers; only sometimes Christina would speak of it to Bernard, knowing that he had learnt, like her, to trust and wait, and seeking to make it better for him at the last.

It was towards the end of July that Au-

gusta, coming home one afternoon from the school, was met by the maid hurrying to meet her with a telegram in her hand. Overton was such a small place and so few things happened there, that a telegram was an unaccustomed thing. Augusta took it eagerly, and then for some reason or other could not make up her mind to open it. It could not,—no, it could not be from Walter. She had heard from him by the last mail; and yet if it was not from Walter who else could have sent it? She went into her husband's study with the yellow envelope in her hand and sank down in a chair, and held it out to him.

"What can it be, John?" she said, breathless. "It must be Walter. Oh, what has happened?"

"Nothing! nonsense!" said Mr. Warde; yet he too looked a little anxious as he broke the seal; but his countenance cleared as he glanced at the paper. "Your Uncle Robert, only your Uncle Robert; he is very ill."

"How thankful I am!" exclaimed Augusta; and then she paused and laughed a little nervously, "I was so frightened, but I did not mean to say that. What is it? Since when is it?" and then he read:—

"George Waltham to Mrs. Warde. Your uncle is dangerously ill. He would be glad to see you and your husband upon important business."

It was only of late that Augusta had known her uncle; but he had been very kind to her, and she had grown to like him. He had been so good to Walter just before he sailed, and had offered him money, though he had not been able to get it accepted; which, to be sure, was Walter's fault. Now it was sad to think of the old bachelor life coming to an end with no one to say a kind word at parting but the family lawyer; it was dismal to think of the great splendid house, and its solitary master, dying there alone.

"And he might have married, I daresay, when he was a young man, and have had sons and daughters, and pleasures and cares like other men," said Augusta, with a regretful pity which her uncle could never have understood.

"He layeth up riches and cannot tell who shall gather them;" so she kept saying to herself as she and her husband made their hurried journey that same night. Then, suddenly, it flashed across her: Would not this event, perhaps, make some change in Walter's position? Where would her uncle's money go?

"It is horrid of me, John, it is horrid

when poor Uncle Robert is dying; but I cannot help thinking what will become of his money!" she cried, remorsefully; and then her thoughts leapt back to her brother; and wonderings and desires would not be banished. She felt it ungrateful, unkind, and guilty to give way to such thoughts at such a moment, and yet how was it possible to help thinking that Walter might come back? Her mind was in a whirl as they drove from the station through the lighted streets. She said she could not go into his house with such feelings: "I cannot go in to see him and pretend to think of nothing but him, if all the time I am longing to say, 'Uncle Robert, do give Walter your money.'"

"You will not think of it then," said Mr. Warde; and he was right.

When the great hall-door was thrown open and they stood within in the lamp-light, and the servants drew back, and Mr. Waltham came forward to meet them, Augusta trembled slightly, not with excitement, but with awe.

"He wishes to see you, Mrs. Warde, to see you alone first. He has been anxiously watching for your arrival."

Augusta never forgot that evening. The lonely worldly man who had made it the work of his life to control his nobler impulses and bury his better nature—who had lived so long in his solitude, yet at this moment of his departure could not overcome a natural desire to see some one who would care for him and be sorry to say good-bye.

"I am setting out on my journey, Augusta," he said feebly; "you will stay in the house until I am gone. I wish your brother had been here; but your husband is a kind man and will see to everything. I may not have done what I ought to have done with my life; perhaps I have made mistakes; my money has done no one much good; there is no one who has cause to be very grateful to me."

"I won't let you say so, Uncle Robert. Remember how you wanted me to come to you, and how good you were to Walter."

"Walter!" he said, and his manner was growing confused; "it is Walter that I was thinking most about. After all he is my own nephew—he will make a better use—Waltham knows all about it, Augusta. You will not go away from the house, and Waltham will tell you what I wish."

Mr. Warde had proved right; it was not of his money that Augusta was thinking now.

When Mr. Waltham told her that her brother was his uncle's sole heir, that she must write to him as soon as possible to come home by the next mail, and that he had orders, if it could be managed, to stop the sale of the Park, the tidings fell strangely upon her ears, and she burst into agitated tears of mingled joy and pain.

If only she could have known that this would happen a little sooner; but now, had not things been done which nothing could undo? If the one thing could not be restored, prosperity and wealth would but mock at an incurable sorrow.

Public opinion was much divided in Overton when it became generally known that the Cleasbys' fortunes were to be re-established. People had sympathized with their reverses, and then they had turned their minds to their probable successors at the Park. Captain Cleasby was a nice young man, but his foolish attachment to Miss North, and his precipitation in making it known, had somewhat lowered him in their eyes. Perhaps if his sister had taken better care of him and cultivated the more eligible young ladies in the neighbourhood, it might not have happened; still they could not altogether exonerate him. It was true that they had resigned themselves and made up their minds to tolerate Christina: indeed some people had been interested by her even in her prosperity; and when misfortune overtook the Cleasbys, when Walter left Overton, and it was understood that all that had been between them was at an end, then, though the current set still against him, it had taken a different turn. They had blamed him for his folly; now they blamed him quite as harshly for his worldly wisdom. If Christina had been like other girls and liked him a little, sufficiently well to marry him for his money and position and agreeable manners, then it would still have been hard upon her, but it would have been no one's fault but Fate's; but now, as they said, evidently it had been much more serious, and the poor girl's heart was broken. If she was dying from the effects of an ordinary fever, why should Dr. Evans look so mysterious and shake his head so sadly when they put their questions? No; it was clear she was dying of a broken heart. Overton was a matter-of-fact little country place: an insignificant corner of the dusty world where the wheel of life turned slowly with a smooth monotony; where people went to and fro upon their business or pleasure without any startling events or thrilling incidents;

and yet there was an unacknowledged desire in their hearts to see with their own eyes something of glory and love and honour—those things of which the poets sang; and this girl's life had come to agitate their tranquil waters and make a stir in the passions which lay dormant.

"Mamma, do you know they say that that girl Captain Cleasby was to have married is very ill. They say it is his fault; he broke off the engagement and went away so suddenly, you know."

"I wish you would not listen to such gossip, Milly," said Lady Bassett; "is it poor dear Walter's fault that he lost all his money through the unkind behaviour of General Cleasby? I don't suppose it can have been any particular pleasure to him to go out penniless to America. I am sure, poor fellow, he looked wretchedly ill when he came to say good-bye; but he had always such nice gentle manners."

"I don't see that nice gentle manners are any excuse for breaking a girl's heart," said Milly, in her youthful severity.

"Girls' hearts don't break so easily," said Lady Bassett, speaking from her long experience.

This was early in the spring; but a few months later people's opinions had undergone a change. "She will marry her cousin," they said, "of course; she has suffered very much, but she is very young. She will get over it in time, and young Oswestry's devotion will be rewarded."

"Dear, dear! I am sure I hope so," said old Mrs. Gregson, sitting in her chintz-covered arm-chair by the parlour fire; for old Mrs. Gregson always had a fire, even in summer: to-day she was giving her monthly tea-party, and her daughter-in-law was pouring the tea for the friends collected round the table. "Dear, dear! I am sure I hope so," said the old lady, nodding her head at them. "She was as pretty a girl as ever I saw. Girls are not so pretty as they used to be in my young days; but still I will say I never saw a prettier girl than Christina North. How well I remember her at the school-feast at the Park; I was telling her about the time when I first married. I remember it as if it was yesterday. She should not have been in such a hurry to begin life; she should have waited a little; but I suppose Captain Cleasby was most in fault; young people will be hasty—and he was a nice-looking young man too."

"Young Oswestry is handsome, though," said Mr. Sim; "the Norths are a handsome family; do you remember Dick North? He is very like him."

So the talk went on, and by the time the unexpected turn in the Cleasbys' fortunes became known, Overton generally had made up its mind that Christina would marry her cousin. It was clear that she must do something.

Mrs. Gregson's granddaughter Louisa, who was a little inclined to be romantic, had indeed been heard to say that perhaps Christina might find it impossible to put anyone else in Captain Cleasby's place, and might remain unmarried after all; but this idea was vehemently rejected by all sensible people. Their convictions were not even disturbed by the news of Mr. Robert Cleasby's death, nor by the probability of Captain Cleasby's return to live once more at the Park. "Christina is so proud, she would never renew her engagement," they said; "and, besides, young Oswestry is all but accepted now." They were not sorry that Captain Cleasby should be disappointed.

The public opinion, as was natural, was only rumoured in Augusta's ears, and it made little impression upon her. She had seen Christina too nearly to believe for a moment that anyone would ever occupy Walter's place; as to the rest, Christina was recovering, and she would be forgiving; they would be happy after all.

She had telegraphed the news to her brother; she had written by the mail; and now there was nothing to do but to wait—and, if only she might, to see Christina. But when she asked if she might go to the White House, Mrs. North wrote to say that she could not be received at present. Christina was not so well. It was nothing; the heat tired her; but they wished her to be kept quite quiet; above all, from any agitating topics or associations. "We tell her nothing that might disturb her mind," the mother said, giving Augusta to understand that she knew nothing of Walter's probable return. Augusta fretted and rebelled against the prohibition. "It would do her good to know," she said; "they are killing the poor child, keeping her like this, always in the dark. Walter cannot be here for five weeks, and she is to remain in ignorance of what everyone else knows for all that time." Augusta had not seen Christina for a long time; she had always been resting, or out of the way, or tired when she had called to see her; and the impression of that first meeting had been nearly effaced from her mind by all that had succeeded to it.

She could do nothing now but follow her letter in imagination, and wait in a fever of suspense for the weeks to pass,

which must elapse before Walter could reach home.

#### CHAPTER XXXI.

THE entangled threads of human life are twisted and broken by human hands; they are ours to be turned and fashioned at will; mechanically, almost unconsciously, we weave our fate; discerning but dimly the consequences of our actions; knowing but little of what we are doing and whither we are tending; seeing, as in the magic mirror, shadows of the world and believing them to be realities; not knowing that we ourselves have cast the shadows and flashed the light between them. It is our power of choice which makes the tragedy of our mistaken lives. It is not that we are miserable, but that we might have been happy; it is not that we are lost, but that we might have been saved; it is not that we stand alone, but that we stand alone by our own choice: we have chosen and we must abide by our choice; we are hemmed in, and we cannot retrace our steps; our lost opportunities, our old desires and aspirations, lie far behind us; other things have taken their room, we find no place for repentance, though we seek it "carefully with tears."

When Walter Cleasby started in his new life, he told himself that the old life was past. What had been done could not be undone; the worst was over for him and for Christina. Everything was new to him; there was all the excitement and enterprise of an adventurous pursuit to engross him; and yet it was an effort and a strain. Do what he would he could not forget; could not forget what he had lost by his own fault. Yet still he struggled on; struggled through the dreary winter; passing the months as best he might; waiting with fierce impatience for the mail; dreading what he should hear, and yet hungering for news of Christina, and turning away impatiently from his sister's letters which said nothing of her. Surely if she had anything comforting to say she would say it; he was longing to hear, and yet something prevented him from asking any questions; each time when he was writing, he said to himself that it was useless to ask, he could get no answer for a month, and before that he would have received another letter from Augusta, telling him what he desired to know.

At last he wrote. "You say nothing of the Norths," he said; "tell me what you can."

In the meantime his anxiety was growing upon him, and his longing becoming

almost unbearable. His nature was not an anxious one; responsibility had never weighed upon him; but now there was no one to whom he could speak, and his suspense was torturing him. He thought of her in a multitude of different ways: proud and composed, reckless and defiant, as silent, and as crying aloud. He tried to put her name into his prayers and to pray that she might be comforted, but felt it almost a mockery to ask that what he had done might be undone. He had thought that all this was past, and now it seemed as if it was all to come over again. He strove to put it from him, but a vision would rise up of Christina standing before him, with those reproachful eyes gazing into his. It was folly it was madness, yet he could not escape them. If she had spoken, he thought, it would not have been so hard; but she was silent as she had been when they met for the last time. The days passed slowly, and yet too quickly; when the day came on which he might expect his letter, he would have given all he possessed that it might not come. He feared, he hardly knew what. He sat for a long time with the letter in his hand before he broke the seal, and when he had read it he laid it down again, and hid his face in his hands and groaned aloud. Was it for this that he had lived? that he might win a girl's heart and leave it to break; that he might put poison into her life and leave it slowly to take effect? It seemed to him all at once that he had been false to her; that he had shivered her faith and broken his trust: seeking to kill a love which could not die: he knew that he loved her, and he believed that she loved him still. He had severed the outward bond, but there was one that was invisible which he could not break. Why had he done it? He had suffered before, for her, and for himself; but he had not known the extent of his capacities for pain until he recognized that in obeying his creed he had sinned against nature and truth and God. And yet he thought that the door was not shut, that as yet it was not too late. If they were once more face to face, forgiveness and salvation might be still within his reach. So he thought in his ignorance, not knowing that repentance could not change what had been done, could not bring the dead to life again.

Thus, whilst summer was still reigning, whilst Christina was still waiting, whilst Augusta's letter was being taken across the sea and her message had not yet reached the Transatlantic shores, he for

whom it was intended was no longer there, and many a league thence in mid-ocean a fate was shaping itself, and in another corner of the earth an unlooked-for visitant was drawing near.

It was on a sultry day in August that Walter Cleasby came once again to the place that had been his home. The sun was blazing over the wide expanse of heath as he drove up to the little house they called the Parsonage. He had telegraphed from London, and his sister would be expecting him. It was nearly nine months since he had parted from her. Though as yet he did not know it, he was coming home to prosperity and riches; in his banishment he had so often yearned after Gusty's voice and the touch of her hands, and yet now, as he drove up and saw her standing at the door, he could not even summon up a smile for the sickness of apprehension that was upon him.

Augusta was standing upon the narrow doorstep, with the flush of agitation upon her cheeks, and a look in her eyes which had not only love and welcome, but compassion in it too. They neither of them spoke, as she kissed him, and drew him after her through the passage into the tiny drawing-room. He sat down on the sofa beside her, and put with his eyes the inquiry which his lips could not frame. Then he saw that there was something she was seeking to hide. She looked at him still with that strange pitiful regret; she had manifested no surprise; she had received him as if his arrival had nothing unexpected about it; there was something which had superseded her natural gladness and agitated joy at seeing him again.

"You are tired, Walter," she said, with a quiver in her voice. She was clinging to him and leaning her head upon his shoulder, perhaps that he might not see her face. "Oh, Walter, I have wanted you so often."

"Gusty, what is it? You are keeping something from me."

Then she made an effort to speak, and gathered up her strength to tell him as best she might.

"I will tell you the truth, Walter," she said; "I do not know how to put it into words: Christina is very ill."

"You mean that she is dead?" he said hoarsely, staring blankly at her.

"No, no, not that," she said; and then she burst into tears. "No, not that; but they say — they cannot give us hope."

"It is false," he said, standing up suddenly, and putting her from him. "It is

false; it is impossible! You mean to say that I have killed her. Where is she?"

"She is at home. But, Walter!"

"Let me go," he said, freeing himself from her detaining hand. The little boarded passage resounded to his tread, as he turned abruptly and made his way out of the house. Augusta, no one, could do anything for him now. As he had sown so he must reap; it seemed impossible that a way was no longer open to him: but he must act alone; no one else could save him.

"Walter, where are you going? You will come back?"

"Come back! yes!" but he did not know what he was saying. She had said that there was little hope; but yet as he rapidly made his way across the heath, his heart was still beating fast with the excited fear which only belongs to hope. He was come back to recall her to life; for the time there was room for no other thought but this, and that undefined apprehension and horror which suspense brings with it. The sky was one great burning vault above his head; it was still too early in the afternoon for any freshness to come to him in the evening breeze, and the level heath was bare of shadows. It seemed to him that there was something awful in the stillness and the unshaded light. The White House dazzled his eyes; the gate was shut; there was no sign of human life; but the windows were all open to the sultry air. He walked up the garden path, not knowing what he was about to do, and stayed his hand for a moment, dreading by any sudden sound to break the stillness; and as he hesitated a shadow darkened the doorway, and Bernard Oswestry stood upon the threshold.

"Stop there!" he said, standing as if to bar his entrance, with his hands against the door-posts. Walter looked at him as if he had been a stranger; indeed, at the moment, he did not recognize him.

"Can Mrs. North see me?" he said; "you will not refuse to take my message?"

"I will take no message," said Bernard, with a ring of passionate scorn. His hands were clenched tightly over the edges of the wood-work with an effort at self-control, but his face was bloodless.

"What do you mean?" said Captain Cleasby. He did not put the question with any anger or impatience, nor yet with a shrinking from the answer; he had forgotten his sin and his remorse, and everything but the fierce anxiety and desire of the moment. The pale faces confronted each other and the eyes met — Bernard's

gleaming with passion and scorn; Walter Cleasby's made intense by suspense and pain.

"You mean," he repeated, "you will take no message, because —"

"Because she is dying, and you have killed her."

Bernard had spoken in the low tones of passion; but every word fell distinctly as it was uttered. It made no difference to Walter; it brought no change over his face; such words could be nothing to him now. He made no answer, but after a moment's thought he tore a leaf from his pocket-book and wrote a few words upon it. Then he laid his hand upon the bell. The flash of passion had died out of Bernard's face, as he stood still in the passage, looking on.

"Wait," he said, as he saw Captain Cleasby's purpose; "I have been wrong. God knows, this is no time . . . Give me your note; if you wait here, I will take it." He had hated the man, and for the moment his hatred had flamed out, when they stood so suddenly face to face; but it could not but die out in the presence of a paramount sorrow, and almost within the gates of death.

Walter Cleasby never knew how long he waited. He lay upon the parched grass beside the door in the shadow of the wall; and the shadow lengthened, and the breeze began to flutter in the leaves, and the evening glow spread itself over the land. He was not unconscious, and he had sufficient manliness not to long for unconsciousness, or to seek in any way to escape from the darkness and horror which was closing him in. The palpitating fear and the whirl of recollections and the horrible certainty had made chaos in his mind: he was altogether confused, and nothing could take a distinct shape in his imagination. He looked back to the time when he had spoken to her first; he looked back to their parting, and to her words and his own; but it was as if he had been looking back at some one else's life; he had suddenly risen to a height of suffering which left those things in the far distance. Some one had told him a dreadful thing; it was not true; it was quite impossible; he did not for a moment believe it; but yet it had made him forget everything else. He tried to remember, and he could not. He had had a horrible dream: some one had come and told him that Christina was dying; that he had killed her. It was false; it was a lie: she could not be dying; she would come to the door presently and speak to him; she would come with her old smile,

and with her hands stretched out; she would call him by his name.

But the stillness was not broken; it never would be broken by her voice thrilling his heart through the summer air. Everything was still as death, still as the grave; but it could not be that she was dying, with peacefulness all around her — with the sun setting behind the hill, and the shadows slowly creeping further towards the east. Why had they said it? What was it they had said? He could not remember. And then, in the midst of his bewilderment, a picture rose up before his mind. The vision which had so long haunted him did not come back to him now; he did not see Christina as when they parted; but it seemed to him that he was once more walking in the spring-time through the tangled wood, in the hollow between the hills, and she was coming to meet him with the light of happiness in her eyes, and that smile upon her lips, and the fresh green boughs above her head making quivering shadows on her path. It could not be that she would never tread that path again. Some one had wanted to take her away; some cruel hand had been outstretched to drag her beneath the cold waters, but he had come back to save her, and he would not let her go. Who was it that said she was dying! She could not be dying; he would not let her die!

He saw the white curtains blowing in the wind, he heard the swing of the gate, he saw Mr. Warde pass into the house, and was vaguely conscious that he was gone to pray for her. It was not true; but still, they thought that Christina was dying. He could not pray for her himself, because everyone was against him; he would keep her, but no one else could. He was struggling, and we cannot pray when one wild rebellion against God has filled our hearts.

It seemed as if he might have been lying there for days or weeks, when at last the summons came. It was Mrs. North who called to him by his name, and met his dazzled, bewildered, horror-stricken eyes with that look of patient endurance which is more pathetic than tears.

"It could not have been if there had been hope, Captain Cleasby," she said; "but nothing can hurt her now. If it is any comfort for you to come, I will not deny it to you. She cannot be harmed. She will not know you." This was not the trembling, murmuring woman he had known before; he hardly recognized her in the dignity of sorrow. He did not be-

lieve it even now, as she motioned to him to follow her. He stepped softly up the old oak staircase; he passed along the winding passage, where the light fell in glimmering patches and the corners remained in darkness; he stood at the open door of the little room, where the wind was blowing through from the window; and there he paused and clasped his cold hands together and shuddered; for in the stillness he heard the sweet low voice, and the wandering talk.

"The birds are singing so loud," it said; "the clouds are moving so fast. I am going . . . they will come too. . . . Keep me safe, O Lord God, this night and for evermore. Amen. Bless my father and mother, and Bernard, and all Thy people. . . . I am so tired . . . I have forgotten my prayers . . . where is the book, mother? . . . forgive us our sins."

O God! this was what they meant — it had come to him now. The truth was flashed upon him, and he could no longer hide his eyes from it. Struggle as he might it must remain; his passion was strong, but death was stronger. It had not conquered as yet, but he felt that it would be victorious. The strife was still manifest in his face amidst the anguish, when Mrs. Oswestry signed to him to come forward; but hope had already given place to a crushing certainty.

He came forward in the silence, and knelt down by the bed.

They thought that she could not know him; the last prayer had been offered up; the last moment was near at hand.

She lay raised up upon the pillows, and her breath came in gasps. The soft wind, blowing through the creepers which clustered round the window, stirred her brown waves of hair; her hands were clasped together; her lips were slightly parted, and her rapt eyes fixed upon the glow which lay like a glory over the heath.

"Christina," he said, with a moaning cry, "stay with me — stay here! Pray to stay, and God will hear. Come back Christina, because I cannot die with you."

She turned her eyes upon him for a moment and smiled. "God bless Walter," she said softly, as if ending her prayer. She looked again towards the glow: the large leaves of the magnolia framed it in; the scent of the blossoms was in the air; the bare room, with the narrow white bed and the uncarpeted floor and the scanty curtain drawn aside, was flooded by the splendour of the sinking sun. Christina's eyes were looking be-

yond it. He felt that she was already gone from him. His cry could not reach her. Life and sin, parting and misery, and the passion of his love lay already far behind her. He could not bring her back. The mysterious halo of death was round her head; the glory of eternity was within her grasp; heaven was opening to her eyes; she must enter in and the golden gates must be shut and he must remain outside. Yet there was a Presence within the room which forbade him to cry out — and awe had silenced his anguish. They waited in the stillness, knowing that they stood in the valley of the shadow of Death.

There is a grave in the little churchyard upon the heath, and a cross which marks the place, and letters which tell that Christina North, aged twenty years, died on the first of August, 1854.

They give to strangers the common record of a girl's life cut short: but there are others to whom they tell a longer story. And some, whilst the winds are blowing in the woods, the sun blazing on the road, and the children's laughter coming up from the valley, are unconscious of all except that the White House is empty; the gate broken from its hinges; the shutters closed and the rooms silent and deserted.

The Vicar's little children are making daisy-chains upon the lawn at the Park; their mother watches them from the Terrace. The place belongs to her brother, but people say that he will never live there again; he comes to England every year, but they say that there is a history belonging to that grave in the churchyard which makes it impossible for him to live at his home. He is a rich man now, but his riches do not seem to have brought him happiness; he looks sadder, and his mouth has grown stern, like that of a man who has suffered. For a time his sister hoped that he would come back and live with her; but now it is said that he is going to be married, and will always remain abroad.

The separation is a great grief to his sister, for she was always so fond of him, and she is not fond of many people. She often goes to the Homestead on the Hill; but it is almost the only house in Overton in which she is a familiar guest.

The Homestead is as peaceful as ever; a place for roses and bees and sunshine; and Mrs. Oswestry is not lonely, for her son lives with her still. Bernard is prospering in his profession; the beauty of

boyhood still lingers about him; his smile is as winning as ever; it is only in his eyes that their is a shadow of patient waiting and a memory of pain. He will meet life bravely, for that other life is near at hand; he walks through the woods where they wandered hand in hand as little children, and across the meadows where her feet have trod; the lilies which they planted blossom every spring under the garden wall, and the blessed memories are close around him. He will pass through life alone; and yet not alone, because Christina is near him still. She will live for ever in his heart, though hidden from his sight.

"It is the living we have ceased to love;  
Not the beloved dead are lost to us."

And she has passed from Death to Life; passed to her rest: above the imperfect harmonies of earth; beyond the sunsets, beyond the hills.

From The Spectator.

#### SOMETHING WRONG WITH THE SUN.

WHEN we consider the intense heat which has prevailed in Europe during July, and the circumstance that in America also the heat has been excessive, inasmuch that in New York the number of deaths during the week ending July 6 was *three times greater* than the average, we are naturally led to the conclusion that the Sun himself is giving out more heat than usual. Though not endorsing such an opinion, which, indeed, is not warranted by the facts, since terrestrial causes are quite sufficient to explain the recent unusual heats, we cannot refrain from noting, as at the least a curious coincidence, that at the very time when the heat has been so great, the great central luminary of the Solar system has been the scene of a very remarkable disturbance, — an event, in fact, altogether unlike any which astronomers have hitherto observed.

It will not be unknown to our readers (in these days, when every one knows everything about the Sun) that astronomers no longer confine their attention to the actual aspect of the solar orb. By a contrivance which need not here be described, the astronomer can tell what is going on in a certain gaseous envelope surrounding the sun, which to ordinary telescopic research is altogether invisible, except during eclipses. This envelope, some four or five thousand miles deep, is called the chromosphere (by purists, the

chromatosphere), and consists in the main of glowing hydrogen, but in its lower strata contains the glowing vapours of sodium, magnesium, and many other elements. These, however, are ordinarily so low down that they can scarcely be recognized under the ordinary conditions of the new method of observation, except here and there round the sun's disc. It is as though our earth were examined by some highly ingenious astronomers in Venus or Mercury, who could recognize at times the vapour of water in our air, where it rose pretty freely and to a considerable height above oceans, but not over the continents, because less vapour there arose into the air. Only, in the sun's case the vapours are not, like the vapour of water on earth, at a cool and pleasant temperature, but are such vapours as rise above the molten surface of metal in our furnaces. They are at so high a temperature that a wind of such vapour, blowing, as such winds do, over the surface of the sun, would be competent to reduce our earth in a few seconds to vapour likewise.

Now certain Italian spectroscopists — Respighi, Secchi, Tacchini, and others — have set themselves the task of keeping a continual watch upon the solar chromatosphere. They draw pictures of it, and of the mighty coloured prominences which are from time to time upheaved out of, or through, the chromatospheric envelope. They note the vapours which are present, as well as what can be learned of the heat at which these vapours exist, their pressure, their rate of motion, and other like circumstances. It was while engaged in some of the more difficult and delicate of these tasks that Tacchini noticed the strange occurrence now to be described.

"I have observed a phenomenon," he says, "which is altogether new in the whole series of my observations. Since May 6, I had found certain regions in the Sun remarkable for the presence of magnesium." Some of these extended half-way round the sun. This state of things continued, the extension of these magnesium regions gradually growing greater, until at length, "on June 18," says Tacchini, "I was able to recognize the presence of magnesium quite round the sun, — that is to say, the chromatosphere was completely invaded by the vapour of this metal. This *ebullition* was accompanied by an absence of the coloured prominences, while, on the contrary, the flames of the chromatosphere were very marked and brilliant. *It seemed to me as though I could see the surface of our great source of*

*light renewing itself.*" While this was going on Tacchini noticed (as had frequently happened before in his experience) that the bright streaks on the sun which are called *faculae* were particularly brilliant close to those parts of the edge of the disc where the flames of the chromosphere were most splendid and characteristic. The granulations also, which the astronomer can recognize all over the sun, when a large telescope is employed, were unusually distinct.

Tacchini concludes (and the inference seems just) that there had not been a number of local eruptions of magnesium vapour, but complete expulsions. Only we would venture to substitute for the word "expulsion" the expression "outflow" or "uprising," since it may well be that these vapours rise by a quiet process resembling evaporation, and not by any action so violent that it could properly be regarded as expulsive.

In whatever way, however, the glowing vapour of magnesium thus streamed into the envelope of the sun, it would seem that the aspect of our luminary was modified by the process,—not indeed in a very striking manner, or our observers in England would have noticed the change, yet appreciably. "More than one person," says Tacchini, "has told me that the light of the sun has not at present its ordinary aspect; and at the Observatory we have judged that we might make the same remark. The change must be attributed to magnesium."

It is impossible to consider attentively the remarkable occurrence recorded by Tacchini without being struck by the evidence which it affords of solar mutability. We know that during thousands of years our sun has poured forth his light and heat upon the worlds which circle around him, and that there has been no marked intermittence of the supply. We hear, indeed, of occasions when the sun has been darkened for a while; and we have abundant reasons for believing that he has at times been so spot-covered that there has been a notable diminution of the supply of light and heat for several days together. Yet we have had no reasons for anticipating that our sun might permanently lose so much of his heat and lustre that the inhabitants of earth would suffer. Tacchini's observation reminds us, however, that processes are at work upon the sun which admit of being checked or increased, interrupted altogether or exaggerated so violently (as it were), that the whole aspect of the sun, his condition as the fire

and lamp of the planetary system, may be seriously affected.

If we only remember that our Sun is one of the stars, not in any way distinguished, unless perhaps by relative insignificance, from the great bulk of the stars which illuminate our skies at night, or are revealed by the telescope, we shall learn to recognize the possibility that he may undergo marked changes. There are stars which, after shining with apparent steadiness, for thousands of years (possibly for millions of years before astronomy was thought of), have become suddenly much reduced in brightness, or after a few flickerings (as it were) have gone out altogether. There are others which have shone with equal steadiness, and have then suddenly blazed out for awhile with a lustre exceeding a hundredfold that which they formerly possessed. It would be equally unpleasant for ourselves whether the sun suddenly lost the best part of his light, and presently went out altogether, or whether he suddenly grew fifty-fold brighter and hotter than he now is. Yet in the present position of sidereal astronomy, it is quite impossible to assert confidently that one event or the other might not take place at any time.

Fortunately, we may view this matter (just as astronomers have learned to view the prospect of mischievous collisions with comets), as a question of probabilities. Among so many thousands of stars there have been so many sudden outbursts of light and fire, so many sudden defalcations of splendour. Our sun is one of those thousands, and so far as we know takes his chance with the rest. Precisely, then, as we derive confidence from the law of probabilities, that since so many only out of so many millions perish by lightning or any other specified form of injury, any individual person is unlikely to perish in that particular way; so may we reason about our sun,—that since only a small proportion of his fellow suns undergo disastrous changes, he is unlikely to be one of the unfortunates. It may be that one of these days, when we obtain clearer ideas of the structure of the sidereal universe than we at present possess, we may obtain more satisfactory reasons for confidence. The analysis of stars with the spectroscope, the recently proposed processes of stargauging, the application of new methods of determining star-motions, these and other researches may show what are the conditions which render a sun's tenure of office precarious. Let it be hoped that when this has been accomplished, a large

majority of the conditions in question will be found, in the case of our own sun, to be favourable to the permanence of his position as fire, light, and life of the planetary system.

From The Athenæum.

SAINT JANE FRANCES-FREMYOT DE CHANTAL.\*

THE present volume of "The Life of St. Jane Frances de Chantal" is a very readable and interesting compilation from more voluminous works, not readily accessible to general readers. It is, of course, highly condensed, and gives only a slight insight into much that we should have desired to read at greater length. The author intrudes very little of herself upon the reader, and has done her work faithfully and conscientiously. A woman of genius would have made a more interesting book out of the materials. Although we are thankful for what we have received, we are left with an earnest desire that somebody would write the life and times of Madame de Chantal, without the medium of spiritual adulation in which saintly biographers feel themselves bound to indulge.

Jane Frances de Chantal was born at Dijon, on the 23rd of January, 1572. Her father was Bénigne Fremyot, the stout-hearted President of the Burgundian Parliament, and of a good old Burgundian family. Her mother died when Jane was only a year-and-a-half old. Jane was brought up in considerable independence, and associated more with her father and his friends than with children or young people. The religious and political discords between the Catholic party and the Calvinists at that period ran very fiercely at Dijon. Jane was early imbued with the short, sharp dogmatic elements of the Catholic faith, and she took them in with the undoubting belief of a child. It is told that one day her father and a Calvinist visitor had been for a long time disputing about "the Real Presence" before Jane, who was then not quite five years old. After a while, she rose from her seat, and going up to the Calvinist with flashing eyes, she said, "But, my Lord, we must believe it." The gentleman, after a playful reply, suited as he thought to such a juvenile adversary, gave her a pocket of

sweetmeats. Jane took them gravely from his hands, and going straight to the fireplace, she flung them into the flames, saying, "Look, my Lord! that is how heretics will be burned in the fire of Hell, because they do not believe what our Lord has said!"

A most uncompromising little miss! She had through life a strain of fierce, overbearing strength and austerity in her nature, which it needed many years, much sorrow, and the gentle culture and example of St. Francis de Sales to temper before she became the loving and well-balanced character which she subsequently was. We are told that Jane's education was carefully attended to—that she learned to read, write, dance, and to play on several instruments; but that, above all, she was instructed in religion—that she loved the Catechism, and "delighted in the definiteness and accuracy of dogmatic teaching." She had early dreams and aspirations after self-sacrifice, and the entire dedication of her life to the service of God; sometimes she desired to be a martyr for her faith, and at others to give herself up to the service of the sick and poor. In 1587 Jane's elder and only sister was married to the head of a considerable family in Poitou, and Jane, then about sixteen, was sent to live with her for a while, both to see society and to be out of the way of the religious and political troubles at home. It was the time of the League and the Civil Wars. The President, Fremyot, was devoted to the party of Henry the Third, and when his Parliament revolted, and joined the insurgents, he left Dijon and retired to the country. He was a high-minded old man, and had an uncompromising sense of honour and loyalty, which Jane inherited from him. In her sister's family she was placed under very dangerous influences for so young a girl. The *dame de compagnie*, who was intended to take care of her, tried to entice her into the use of magic, in order that she might marry one of the great noblemen of Poitou. She encountered other dangers, more insidious, in the admiration and flattery which she met with; but we are told that she put herself under the protection of the Blessed Virgin, and gave herself more resolutely to her religious duties. She seems also to have stoutly resisted the love of magnificent attire, although many years afterwards St. Francis waged war against the lace and embroidery in which she indulged, and the elegant fashion of her dress, also against her long and beautiful hair, which he in-

\* *The Life of Saint Jane Frances-Fremyot de Chantal*. By Emily Bowles. Quarterly Series, Vol. II. (Burns, Oates, & Co.)

duced her to cut off. Jane was endowed with much good sense, and she evinced her judgment in the matter of her suitors. She refused two brilliant marriages because one of the gentlemen was a concealed Huguenot, and the other a man without any sense of religion. In 1591, she was recalled home to Dijon, and there she met the individual whom her father had selected as her husband,—one of his own friends and companions in arms, Christopher de Chantal, Baron de Rabutin, who, though under thirty, had fought no less than eighteen duels,—which Bussy de Rabutin ascribed to the great meekness and suavity of his demeanour. One of Madame de Chantal's grandchildren (Gabrielle de Toulougon) became the first wife of Bussy de Rabutin; and that fascinating scapegrace led her such a life, that the Capuchin Friar who preached her funeral sermon declared "that he scarcely knew which of the two, Madame de Chantal or Madame de Rabutin, would receive the brightest eternal crown"! but this was all long after the time we were speaking of. Madame de Chantal found her own husband a religious, cultivated, witty, and agreeable man, with whom she lived very happily, and whose death was the greatest grief in her life. Madame de Chantal had very noble elements in her character: she had an ever-present sense of duty; she had the courageous faculty of estimating things and people at their proper worth; she had a sense of the relative value of the different claims on her time and attention; she understood the beauty of proportion in all things. In after-life she became remarkably gentle and loving; but as a young woman she was harsh, imperious, and austere. The young couple resided at Bourbilly, a lovely country-seat, which afterwards came to Madame de Chantal's granddaughter, Madame de Sévigné. The civil wars of the League against Henry the Fourth were at their height; and the Baron de Chantal, one of the king's warmest adherents when he became a Catholic, was called to Paris, where he went, leaving to his young wife the sole administration of his large but dreadfully encumbered property. Jane showed herself equal to the trust; and her skilful economy and wise government, her bright and cheerful spirit—for when not opposed she was fascinating,—and her care for the servants, both in the castle and on the outlying portions of the estate, brought order, peace, and prosperity out of the confusion, and they form a pleasant picture of domestic life of the period. She

was a model *châtelaine*, and had a genius for administration and organization. She was singularly kind and merciful to all her husband's prisoners, brought, for whatever offence, to the dungeons of the castle; for of course the Baron exercised all the powers of justice and execution like the other Seigneurs of those good old times. Four children were born of the marriage, one boy and three girls: it was the boy, Celse Bénigne de Chantal, who became in after years, the father of Madame de Sévigné, and narrowly escaped being hanged for his share in a duel, in his quality as second to Bouteville de Montmorency.

The message came to him on an Easter Sunday, whilst he was in church with his family, receiving the Communion: he jumped up from his knees, left the church, and ran, in his velvet shoes and gala dress, just as he was, to the Porte St-Antoine, fought his duel with Montmorency's second, as was the rule in those days, killed his man, and fled for refuge to his sister, Madame de Toulougon. Bouteville de Montmorency was arrested and executed. Celse Bénigne de Chantal was sentenced to death by the Parliament of Paris, and Madame de Chantal had actually made her preparations to go to him, to help him to sustain his punishment. He, however, escaped that danger, and was killed not long afterwards at the siege of La Rochelle, a death which his mother considered an honour. Madame de Chantal's brief married life came to an untimely end. Her husband went out one day shooting into the woods round Bourbilly with a friend and relative, M. d'Anlézy; his friend's gun went off by accident, and M. de Chantal was so dangerously wounded that, after lingering for nine days in great agony, he died, after adding a clause to his will, in which he declared his death purely accidental, and disinheriting any of his children who should seek to revenge it. Madame de Chantal nearly died of grief, but her mind regained its balance, and she devoted herself to her children, and to following out the wishes of her husband in the management of their property. Nearly her first action, we are told, was to seal her love to her lost husband by a vow of perpetual chastity. She reviewed all her goods, and gave her wedding-dress and all her rich clothes to the Church, made bundles of her husband's clothes, and gave them to the poor; pensioned off all the servants not absolutely necessary; and placed her household on a most moderate footing. She had at this time a singular prevision of the friend and director who

was to exercise such an influence over her after life. Like all religious Catholics, she felt the need of a wise director to guide her. One day, as she was riding alone on the outskirts of a little wood, whither she had gone to look after some workpeople, she saw at a short distance a person who looked like a bishop coming towards her, dressed in cassock, rocket, and biretta. His countenance, serene and heavenly, gave her a sense of great inward peace and consolation. At the same moment, the thought was suggested within her, "This is the guide and man in whose hands you will place your conscience." On riding up to the spot, she found no one; but in after years, when she first saw Francis de Sales, Bishop of Geneva, she recognized him as the one whose appearance she had seen on this occasion. We are also told that at that same time, the bishop, being rapt in prayer in the old Castle de Sales, saw the vision of a young widow, whose face was unknown to him, and as if a curtain had been drawn up, he saw gathered together a new religious congregation, of which he was assured the young widow was to be the mother, and himself the guide and director. Signs and miracles were plentiful in the lives of both of them. Madame de Chantal's widowhood was spent partly with her old father at Dijon, and subsequently with her father-in-law in his gloomy old Castle of Monthelon. The Baron Rabutin de Chantal was a dreadful old Turk, who often made his household tremble for their lives; he, however, in his turn, lived in bondage to his housekeeper, a terrible virago, who wasted his substance, and reigned supreme in the castle along with her five children. Of course she hated Madame de Chantal, and resented her right to interfere. The Baron took the part of his tyrant, and when Madame de Chantal spoke once to him about the disorderly condition of things he exploded into such a burst of rage and insolence that she never again attempted to interfere, and the housekeeper enjoyed the power to mortify her in every possible way. But Jane was already in training for becoming a Saint; she took her new position patiently; tried to educate the five children along with her own, and even washed and dressed them, for their mother neglected them, and seems to have been an essentially bad, vulgar woman.

We cannot go into the details of her first meeting with St. Francis, nor the rule of life he gave her. It was mixed up with austerities, and a nun-like detachment from the world, and was the beginning of the

religious life she afterwards embraced. For some years longer, however, she continued to live in the Castle of Monthelon, bringing up her children wisely, and trying, by the force of example, to bring the Baron and his household gradually into some sort of order. Francis de Sales was much attached to all the children of Madame de Chantal, especially to Marie Aymée, who became, whilst still almost a child, the wife of his youngest brother, Bernard de Sales. The letters that Madame de Chantal wrote to St. Francis are unfortunately lost, for when her letters were returned after his death, fearing they might be published, she destroyed them. In the beginning his influence upon her was admirable; he softened the vehemence and the asperities of her strong character, and under his guidance she became a matured and noble christian woman. He helped her with counsels in the management of her children, softening her severity, and preventing her from making them hate religion by over-much anxiety. Nothing can be wiser or more beautiful than his watchful care over them. He says of himself — "I think I have that kind of fatherly heart which is motherly too." To Françoise, the youngest of the family, he writes thus: —

"I conjure you, my dear child, from day to day wean your heart from frivolous amusements. I am not scrupulous, and I only call frivolity the voluntary inclination to things which turn away the mind from thoughts and meditations upon eternity."

He even interceded with her mother that the young creatures might be allowed to have the pretty things and fine clothes appropriate to their station, and which their hearts desired, although he seems to have been very scrupulous that the dress should not be "cut too low" for modesty. That which her Catholic biographers regard as the crowning virtue and great claim to sanctity in Madame de Chantal, we can only look upon as a great and grievous error. Led away by her love and over-estimation of the virtue of a conventual life, she left her father, who was then near eighty years old, she left her father-in-law, the old Baron Rabutin de Chantal, she left her children, in order to embrace the life of a nun, in the first convent of the Visitandines, an order founded for her by St. Francis himself. The account given of her departure and farewell to her family treats of the consent wrung with tears from the old father; of the poor old sinner, the Baron, who was nearly "senseless with

grief" when she quitted the castle; of her son, the impetuous Celse Bénigne, who flung himself across the threshold of the door, declaring she should pass over his body if she would go, and she did step over him. She left all the natural ties that God had given her, to become a saint, and the foundress of sixty-five convents, and a woman whose name has gone forth to the ends of the world.

From Saint Pauls.

CLEMENCE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PATTY."

I.

THE old Court-yard of the "Ours d'Or" is full of warm light, but it is not glowing August sunshine.

The tall fuschias in green tubs which border the court are scarcely in leaf; there are no blossom-buds on the myrtles, though they have put out bright tender little leaves of expectation; the fountain sparkles, but the fish are not gambolling in the basin below—they are still housed safely in the glass globe in Clémence's parlour.

The sun disports himself chiefly among the gouldres roses and lilacs, which atone just now for the shabby brown show they will make in autumn, by a perfect luxury of blossoms; snowy masses with exquisite green and grey shadows in between; lilac flowers, now rich, now delicate—always exquisite, both in hue and fragrance.

It is almost May, and yet the keen March wind lingers so as to keep Eulalie the cook—there is no male *chef* at this old Flemish inn—mindful of her rheumatism, and unwilling to venture out of the warm shelter of her kitchen.

Eulalie is a small spare woman, with a clever face and dark eyes; these are full of vexation as she stands beside a small table on one side of the kitchen, and strips the leaves from crisp young lettuce-plants.

"It is insupportable," she grumbles, as she drops each leaf deftly into the shining brass pan of water at her feet. "Mam'selle Clémence goes beyond reason; if her sister, Madame Scherer, were to ask for the gown off Mam'selle's back she would send it her. She gave Madame Scherer a husband, though it almost broke her heart, and that is enough—too much; it is folly to go on pouring wine into a full bottle."

Eulalie shrugs her shoulders and shreds off the lettuce-leaves faster than ever; she has a clever head and a warm heart, but

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her temper needs a safety-valve. Some time ago it had found this, when Madame de Vos—the mother of the landlord of the "Ours d'Or"—came self-invited to manage her son's household.

Eulalie disliked the fat pink-faced dame from the beginning, first for the petty vexations which Madame de Vos had inflicted on her son's wife, Eulalie's own dear mistress, but chiefly for the uncere-monious way in which she had installed herself at the "Ours d'Or" after her daughter-in-law's death.

Eulalie had put on her war-paint at that time, and had felt compelled to keep her fighting weapons sharp and bright, and to say truth this process was in some way congenial to the skilful old woman.

At that time had happened the great sorrow of Clémence de Vos. Her betrothed lover, Louis Scherer, had returned at the appointed time to claim her as his wife; but Clémence was absent, and the extreme beauty of her young sister Rosalie, and, as Eulalie always persisted in affirming, the manœuvres of Madame de Vos, so infatuated the young soldier, that Clémence voluntarily released him from his troth-plight, and he and Rosalie were married.

But Clémence's father had been unable to forgive the wound inflicted on his beloved child, and, on Rosalie's wedding-day, madame her grandmother went back to live in her own house at Louvain.

"Dame! what a happiness! what a relief!" Eulalie had said. "Mam'selle Clémence will now take the place that should always have been hers; and what an angel is Mam'selle Clémence!"

It may be that the principle which urged the cook at the "Ours d'Or" so constantly to brighten the shining brass pots and pans on her kitchen-wall was thorough, and led her also to fear lest her tongue too might grow dull and rusty unless she sometimes sharpened it against her master Auguste de Vos, and even against the "angel" Mam'selle Clémence.

There is a slight sound, and Eulalie looks up.

A black-cloaked figure stands at the parlour door on the opposite side of the long, paved, arched-over entrance to the courtyard of the "Ours d'Or."

Eulalie comes forward to the door of her kitchen, which is on the opposite side of the paved entrance way.

"Mam'selle Clémence," she says, shrilly.

"Yes, yes, Eulalie, I am coming;" the voice is so sweet that one is impatient to see the face which goes with it, but Clé-

mence has turned back to listen to her father's last words.

Auguste de Vos is a stout, florid Belgian, but he has dark hair and an intelligent face. He looks younger and happier too, since he has been left to live alone with Clémence; he has the same blessed freedom from domestic worry that he enjoyed while his wife lived. Clémence has a dexterous way of keeping the bright side of life turned towards her father; even Eulalie's querulousness rarely reaches him. Auguste de Vos has never been a demonstrative man; but ever since the evening when Rosalie's marriage was decided, there has been a graver tenderness in his manner to his eldest daughter, a something not to be painted in words, but which often kindles in Clémence that strange emotion which brings a sob and a smile together.

"Well, my child," Auguste de Vos is saying, "if thou sayest it is needful, I yield; but remember always that Rosalie has three maids and only two children: it is to me inconceivable that after all her grandmother has done for her, and for Louis Scherer too, they should not contrive to nurse my mother in her sickness without thy help."

Clémence smiles: she has a sweet sensitive face, but her dark eyes light up at this smile, and sparkle brightly through the long black lashes.

"Poor Rosalie! Thou art severe, my father; but it is almost the first request she has made me since her marriage, and it seems a beginning, and —" here Clémence falters and blushes, and then looks frankly into her father's eyes — he is father and mother both to her now — "only thou knowest well Rosalie has never been the same to me since she went away."

Her father's eyes are full of wistful tenderness.

"The fault is none of thy making, Clémence."

"I must go to Eulalie:" she nods and leaves him. "Poor Rosalie," she says to herself, "she is not yet forgiven."

"Hein," Eulalie puts her head on one side like a pugnacious sparrow as Clémence steps into the kitchen, "fine doings, indeed; and it is true then, Mam'selle, that you go to-morrow to Bruges to nurse the bonne-maman who never was once good to you?"

"Hush, Eulalie, you may not so speak of my grandmother," Clémence's grey eyes look almost severe.

Eulalie turns to the table behind her.

"I speak as I find, Mam'selle. Duty is

duty everywhere; and to me, Mam'selle, Monsieur is of more value than Madame his mother, and he will be sad without you; and she — well she would have perhaps a little neglect, what will you? Madame Scherer is young, and she loves her ease; but she will be obliged to take care of Madame de Vos, if you do not go, Mam'selle Clémence."

"Nevertheless I am going," Clémence speaks decidedly, and her bright smile quiets Eulalie. "Now I want some broth, a cold chicken, if you can spare me one, and some eggs. I am going to see your friend, the wife of the sacristan of St. Michel."

Eulalie grunts, but she produces the food demanded, and carefully stows it away in a basket.

"It is all very well," she says; "I don't grudge the food and drink which Mam'selle gives, but I ask myself, when Mam'selle Clémence marries and goes away — and she will marry some day, I suppose — ah! but the man will be lucky! — what will then happen to the wife of the sacristan and all the other sick folk of our parish? She has used them to these dainties; ma foi! it will be harder to give them up altogether than to go without them now."

Louis Scherer left the army on his marriage; he has an appointment at Bruges, and Rosalie found housekeeping so little to her liking, that after the first few months she persuaded her husband to let Madame de Vos live with them.

For a time this arrangement had been successful. Madame doated on the young couple, managed the servants, and contributed liberally to household expenses; but when babies came — two with only a year's interval between — strife arose about their management, and the discord in his household disgusted Louis Scherer.

It was at his instigation that Rosalie had now written to ask Clémence to come and help to nurse Madame de Vos in her sickness.

## II.

LOUIS met his wife's sister at the railway station. Clémence had not seen him for more than a year: she thought he looked aged; his fair, handsome face was full of worry.

They had met since the marriage, and all remembrance of the old relations had been effaced by the new, save it may be a certain self-complacency in the man in the society of the woman who had once so dearly loved him, and in the woman a certain blindness to faults which were visible

to all other eyes; but then Clémence de Vos was indulgent to everyone — to every one but herself.

She asked after all the family, and then, "How is the *Sœur Marie*?" she asked. "Does Rosalie see her often?"

"*Ma foi*," — Louis twirled his pretty, soft moustaches: he was really handsome, though he looked too well aware of the fact, — "*Rosalie* may, and she may not, see your aunt, the *Sœur Marie*; but she does not tell me. I have no special liking for religieuses, especially when they are no longer young or pretty; but here we are, Clémence, and there is your little god-daughter peeping out of window."

They had come up a by-street, which ended on the quay of one of the canals, bordered on this side by a closely planted line of poplar trees. The newly opened leaves trembled in the warm sunshine reflected from the red, high-gabled houses over the water — houses which went straight down to the canal edge, and seemed to bend forward so as to get a view of their own full-length reflections in the yellow water. Behind the houses rose the graceful *tournelles* of the *Hôtel de Ville*, and beyond, rising high above all the rest, was the *beffroi*. It was just three o'clock, and suddenly the carillon sounded out from the lofty tower, swelling, with sweet throbs, through the air above them, as if the angels were holding a musical festival in those melodious, unearthly strains.

But Louis was too much used to the carillon to notice it. "There is your god-daughter, Clémence," he said.

Clémence started from her rapt listening. It had seemed to her she heard her mother's voice up there among the angels.

Louis Scherer lived in a red stepped-gabled house. There was a pointed window in the gable, with an arched hood of grey stone: the window-mullions too were of stone. Below were two similar windows, with a carved spandril between the arches; and at one of these lower windows peeped out a little smiling cherub-face — a miniature, Clémence thought, of Rosalie.

Clémence kissed both hands to the little maid, and then went in through the open archway below the windows.

There was a patter of little feet, a chirrup of slight treble voices, and then two laughing baby faces peeped from behind a green, half-closed door on the left of the paved entrance.

Clémence forgot where she was, forgot even the *bonne-maman*'s illness, and sat

down on the door-step, with the two blooming darlings nestling in her arms.

The younger of the two, the little Clémence, talked glibly in her soft, incoherent gibberish; but little Louis played for a while at being shy, alternately hiding his face in his aunt's black cloak, or else looking up with round, shining blue eyes, and his pink, fat forefinger between his pouting lips.

Louis had passed on into the house to fetch his wife.

"*Tiens, tiens!*" Rosalie's voice sounded so shrill, that Clémence put the children off her lap, and jumped up from her low seat.

The sisters kissed each other affectionately, and then they exchanged looks.

"*Ma foi*," Rosalie said to herself, "Clémence grows younger-looking every time I see her."

"Rosalie looks troubled;" and Clémence followed her sister up-stairs, stifling a wish that she would look more sweet and simple. She was still a beautiful blonde; but the Rosalie of Clémence's youth had been lovelier in her simplicity than the befrizzled, over-dressed lady, whose smile was so forced and rare. In the short minute that followed their greeting Clémence had seen Loulou shrink away from his mother, and cling to his father's knees.

Madame de Vos's bedroom was at the end of the upstairs gallery. The walls were white, and so were the bed-hangings, with their white-tufted fringe. The cushion in the window-seat was covered in white dimity; the window itself was shrouded in white curtains, fringed like the bed-hangings. All this white seemed to bring out in yet stronger relief the deeply tinted pink face of Madame de Vos. She stretched one hand out to greet Clémence; the other lay still on the coverlet, powerless for evermore.

"*Eh bien*, my child, thou art come at last, then, to look at what is left of thy grandmother. Ah! but, Clémence, is it not incredible that I, so active, and of so perfect a constitution, should be lying here like a silly old woman, and la *mère Borot*, that old imbecile, who has at least ten more years than I have, ails nothing? *Ma foi*, I cannot understand how this is."

Clémence kissed the fretful face, and then seated herself at the bedside.

"Thou canst stay a few minutes, Clémence," Rosalie nodded, "but not longer. I have much to say to thee."

Madame de Vos looked angry.

"Rosalie, thou art so selfish. Thou hast

Louis and the children; leave Clémence to me: I have no one."

She closed her eyes with a weary sigh. Rosalie made an expressive grimace at her sister, and crept out of the room. Clémence sighed too. At home she and her father lived in such unbroken harmony, this discord seemed doubly jarring. This was only her second visit to Bruges, and when Rosalie had paid short visits to the "Ours d'Or" she had been gay and bright. But her grandmother soon claimed Clémence's attention. Madame de Vos began with her own sufferings, and then went on to the neglect, the vanity, the bad temper of Rosalie.

"And, Clémence, she is also jealous. She will not let thee stay long with me, lest thou shouldst love me best. It is the same with the little ones: they love the *bonne-maman*, poor darlings; and so they may not run to the end of the gallery—and I who have done everything for her."

As soon as she could get the words in, Clémence interrupted,—

"Does la tante come to see thee—the *Sœur Marie*?"

"No; no one remembers me now. I am helpless, and suffering, and forgotten. I had plenty of friends, as thou knowest, when I had a house of my own, and did not spend my money on ungrateful children. The *Sœur Marie*, why should she come? Rosalie told me that Louis disliked to see her, and so I told my poor *Marie* to keep away; and, Clémence, it is true that *Marie* is not an amusing companion."

It was such a new pleasure for the invalid to get so sweet and cheerful a listener, that she would scarcely let Clémence go when she was summoned to supper.

Sounds of angry voices came from the eating-room. Clémence opened the door, and met Louis just coming out. He had his hat in her hand, and his face was flushed.

"Bon soir, my sister," he said. "You and Rosalie may have all the talk to yourselves."

He passed out, and Clémence looked at her sister. Rosalie's face was heated and angry. She sat in sullen silence, and gave Clémence her supper without any remark.

"I find *bonne-maman* better than I thought to find her. The attack does not seem to affect her speech."

Rosalie shrugged her shoulders.

"Thou mayest well say that." She tossed her befrizzled head. "Very surely she has been telling thee fine tales about

me and my doings. Ah! I know,"—she disregarded Clémence's attempt to stop her—"it is always I who do all the wrong. Others may do as they choose; but they are always right with *bonne-maman*."

Clémence's heart ached: it seemed as if there was no union in this household. A tender, motherly longing to comfort her young sister urged her to speak.

"But how is it, Rosalie?—thou wast always the one she loved best. When people are ill, dearest, they get fractious, and find fault with those they prefer."

Rosalie shook her head.

"It is useless to talk about it, Clémence. It did not begin with this illness: the *bonne-maman* is unjust and selfish, and I do not wish to talk about her."

It seemed to Clémence that it was not easy to talk about anything to Rosalie. She would not speak either of her husband or her children. The only subject in which she seemed interested was a new toilette—a dress and bonnet she had been choosing for the fête to be held next week in the *Jardin Botanique*.

"Thou wilt like it, Clémence. There will be music, and the officers will all be there." It seemed to Clémence that Rosalie blushed.

"But I shall not go. The *bonne-maman* is quite helpless, though she can talk, and I do not think she ought to be left till she is better."

"As thou wilt." Rosalie's sullen look came back, and it seemed best to leave her to herself.

### III.

THE fête in the *Jardin Botanique* begins at two o'clock. There is just time to hurry over the children's meal, and for Rosalie to make a fresh toilette when she comes in from mass.

She is in a flutter of anxiety when she comes down stairs. Clémence has not seen her sister look so bright since her arrival at Bruges.

"Come, *Loulou*, make haste." Rosalie speaks cheerfully, without the fretful ring to which Clémence has grown accustomed. "We shall be late, if thou dost not hasten." She goes to the window. It seems a matter of course that Clémence should sit between the two children, giving them their dinner.

"Oh! what lovely weather!"—there is all the glee of a child in Rosalie's voice—"and I was so afraid it would be cold." The door opened, and her husband came in. He was evidently struck by her improved looks.

"Are we not gay in our new bonnet?" he said, to Clémence. "I am just in time, Rosalie, to escort thee to the Jardin Botanique."

"Thanks" — Clémence started at the changed voice, and she saw the smile fade away — "I have no wish to be troublesome, Louis. I am sure thou couldst find a more amusing companion; and I have to take care of Loulou and little Clémence."

"As it pleases thee; but I suppose we may as well start together."

Louis spoke carelessly; but it seemed to Clémence that he was wounded. He stood whistling, with his hands in his pockets, while the children were got ready.

Clémence sighed when they had all gone away. It had been sad enough to see the disunion between Rosalie and her grandmother; but this was worse. Was Louis really an unkind husband, and was this the secret of the change in Rosalie? But her grandmother's bell rang loudly, and she was soon by the invalid's bed, listening to the reiteration of all her sufferings, the wealth and importance of the family Van Rooms, and the devotion evinced by Madame de Vos to her grandchildren.

"I am glad the day is so fine," said Clémence.

Madame de Vos grunted and turned away with a discontented look on her pink face.

"Thou art glad for Rosalie to play peacock. Ah, Clémence, if thou wert married to Louis, would it be necessary for thee to chatter to all the officers in the town?"

Clémence gave a little start, but she began to talk of something else; she would not believe evil of Rosalie.

Louis came home long before Rosalie did; he brought Loulou with him. Clémence found the little boy in his nursery, crying.

"Papa has sent me away from him," he sobbed; "and maman has called me a naughty boy, and I am not naughty, my aunt."

Clémence always stole some minutes every day from the invalid, to play with the children; but to-day she stayed in the nursery longer than usual. It was a large room at the top of the house: no fear that noise could reach mother or grandmother. Clémence romped and laughed till she was fairly tired; she loved Loulou dearly, he was so caressing and affectionate.

"Thou art a good fairy, my aunt," the child said, as he came down stairs with her to the door of his great-grandmother's room. "It is always bright in the house now thou art here; I am never triste."

He hugged her so tightly that Clémence's face was hidden in his curls.

At the moment Rosalie appeared at the other end of the passage; she looked flushed and angry, and she passed on into her room without a word.

When Clémence went downstairs to supper, she found Louis alone.

"I am not going out this evening," he said. "We need not wait supper for Rosalie; she has gone to bed."

"What is it?" Clémence asked herself. "There is a constrained atmosphere in this house. I dare not ask a question, lest I should do mischief or make a quarrel. Are Louis and Rosalie really miserable, or is it only before others that they speak so coldly?"

Marriage was different from what Clémence had pictured it; and yet when she thought of her father and mother, she felt that there must be something amiss between Louis and Rosalie.

Next morning, at breakfast-time, Loulou sat close to his mother.

"The aunt Clémence is a good fairy," he said; "if I am crying, she makes me happy again: she is like sunshine; the room is dark and sad when she goes out of it. Maman, get some sunshine from our aunt Clémence."

Rosalie was pouring out coffee; her hand shook, and the table-cloth was spoiled. She turned a crimson face on Loulou, and boxed his ears.

"Go upstairs, naughty chatterbox: see the mischief thou hast done."

Louis Scherer looked up from his newspaper. Generally he ate his breakfast without making a remark of any kind; but Loulou was his special darling.

"Thou art unjust," he said to his wife: "it was not Loulou who upset the coffee."

Rosalie's eyes flashed.

"No; of course it is always I who am to blame—I who am wrong with every one."

She got up, and left the breakfast-table. Louis muttered an exclamation, and then he smiled at Clémence.

"Will you pour out coffee, or shall I?" he said.

Clémence felt miserable.

"Go after her," she said in a low voice. Louis raised his eyebrows.

"You are not used to Rosalie: it is necessary to her to be jealous. It is you and the children to-day; it will be some one else to-morrow. It is better to leave her alone."

"And yet," Clémence thought as she sat afterwards in her grandmother's room,

"what can this leaving alone come to? Must not each of these little jars weaken love? And how they loved each other once; ah, if I could only see them happy again!"

She heard a rustling at the door; opening it gently, she saw little Louis sobbing, curled up on the passage floor.

Clémence held out her hand, but the child shrank away.

"What is it, darling?" She went after him, and caught him up in her arms.

"It is thy fault, not mine now." A look of infinite relief came into the little troubled face. "Maman says I am naughty to love thee so much; and now it is thou who lovest me, Aunt Clémence;" but he twined his arms round her neck, "I do love thee best in the world."

Aunt Clémence was glad to hide her eyes among his golden curls. She was shocked, frightened even, that Rosalie could thus teach her child evil; and yet, what could she do? If she spoke to Rosalie, it might perhaps bring open discord between them.

She stood hugging the child in her arms, and Rosalie's door opened.

Clémence felt guilty before her sister's frowning face, only for an instant, then she set little Loulou down.

"Run upstairs," she said quietly; "go and play with the little one."

The boy looked from one face to the other, and hesitated.

"Go, Loulou," said Clémence; and he bounded upstairs.

"Why dost thou send him away, Clémence? When I asked thee to come and nurse our grandmother, it was not that thou mightest rule my children and my house."

Clémence opened her bed-room door.

"Come in here," she said. Rosalie had spoken in a high, constrained voice, and one of the servants was crossing the end of the gallery.

Rosalie followed her sister, but she went on speaking.

"I care not who hears me: I have done no wrong this time. No mother can submit quietly to be robbed of the love of her children."

"Listen to me." Clémence spoke firmly. "Rosalie, thou art not happy, and thy vexation makes thee unjust to all. Children always like new faces; if I were here always, Loulou would not care for me; and it is the same with *bonne-maman*. Why, Rosalie," Clémence's eyes were full of tender sweetness—she smiled into the fair sulky face, "thou knowest thou wast

always the pet and the favourite: no one could ever help loving thee. Jealousy should never trouble thee."

Rosalie's eyes flamed with anger.

"Thou art as unjust as Louis is. I am not jealous, I am not vain; but surely when I find every one preferred, when husband and children too desert me, it is time that I should feel it. I am not insensible Clémence. Cold, correct people do not know how warm hearts suffer." Tears sprang to her angry eyes, but she wiped them away. "It is useless for one to try to teach another."

Clémence put her arm round her sister, and kissed the flushed unwilling cheek.

"I did not mean that thou hadst not sorrows, dearest; only thou must not brood over them. Vexations are like eggs; if we leave them to grow cold, they will perish out of existence; but if we nurse them, they will gain strength and life. Why not go and romp with the children now?—it would do thee good."

Rosalie drew herself proudly away.

"Single women talk of what they cannot understand," she said bitterly. "I suppose I shall get a lecture next on behaviour towards Louis: I am thankful all the same;" she curtseyed profoundly, and then swept haughtily on to the door; "but, Clémence, when I want advice about my behaviour, I will ask for it."

#### IV.

MONSIEUR DE VOS is pacing slowly up and down the courtyard of the "Ours d'Or," his head droops forward, his hands are clasped behind him; between them he holds an open letter. He has been walking up and down in perplexed silence for at least ten minutes—silence unbroken except by the vociferations of Clémence's canary-bird from his green and gold cage in one of the arbours.

The silence however, is not solitary. Eulalie stands at her kitchen door. The wind has a keen easterly twang in it, but Eulalie has forgotten her rheumatism; she stands with her left hand clasping her waist, and the fingers of the right hand pressed against her lips, as if to keep in her words.

For, though she has been dumb, her face is full of defiance. She has burst forth once in vehement disapproval, and has been bid to hold her peace; but the remainder of her objections are on her tongue with a sure purpose of being spoken.

The letter between her master's fingers is from Clémence; it tells in simple words

that Madame de Vos is better, but that she needs change of air and scene, and that Clémence wishes to bring her grandmother home to the "Ours d'Or."

In his heart Monsieur de Vos feels the truth of his old servant's words, that Madame de Vos has always ill treated Clémence, and that there will be strife if she comes back; but Auguste de Vos is too dutiful to permit Eulalie's tongue this licence, and he has told her sternly to mind her own business.

"It is my business," muttered the cook; "but it ought to be yours."

He stops at last in his walk, and comes up to Eulalie.

"They will be here to-morrow," he says: "you had better see that their rooms are ready."

"Monsieur," Eulalie's face looks as wooden as one of the painted figures in the courtyard, "I love you and Mam'selle, but I cannot obey a new mistress; you must then engage a new cook for the 'Ours d'Or.'"

"Eulalie," the master's face is as set as the maid's, "you are good, but you are also imbecile. Do you not know that you could not live away from Mam'selle Clémence? do you not know also that any other soup than yours would give me indigestion? There, it is ended; I will not hear another syllable."

Monsieur de Vos probably thinks it best not to trust to his cook's self-control, for he walks quickly up the arched entrance-way, and stands looking out over the little Place.

Clémence does not complain in her letter to her father, and yet the tone of it troubles him. Like many another silent man, seemingly self-absorbed and indifferent, Auguste de Vos is keenly sensitive to the joys and sorrows of those he loves; his sympathy with Clémence is so perfect, that he knows already that her visit to Bruges has been unhappy, but he is not going to question her.

"She will tell me what I ought to know," he said. "Clémence is good; but she has a gift that is rarer among women than goodness—she knows when to speak, and when to be silent."

But when she came, though Clémence was silent, Monsieur de Vos was soon informed of the disunion in the Scherer household.

Madame de Vos had not recovered the use of her left hand; but she was no long-bedridden, and her tongue wagged quite as freely as ever.

She told her son that she was quite sure

Rosalie's ill-temper and jealousy had driven Clémence away from Bruges.

Monsieur de Vos felt indignant; that his good patient child, after all she had suffered, should be ill treated by any one, was hard to bear; but unkindness from Rosalie, for whom Clémence had given up the happiness of her young life, seemed to the tender father the highest pitch of ingratitude.

"And Louis, my mother, how does he behave?"

"I have no quarrel with Louis; he is perhaps, not at home so much as he used to be, but what will you, Auguste? If a woman is jealous and finds fault, you cannot expect a man to be always patient."

"When people love each other so foolishly, that it is necessary to set others aside that just these two may marry, *ma mère*—it seems to me,"—here Monsieur de Vos became conscious of his frowning brows and irate voice, and smoothed himself into a more dutiful aspect,— "it seems to me that such a pair should be more than usually loving and happy. But it is true in this as in other things, ill-gotten goods never prosper."

Madame de Vos put her handkerchief to her small round eyes. She was not crying; but it seemed to her that her son's words were personal, and it behoved her to resent them.

"You forget that I approved of the marriage, Auguste, and it is impossible with my experience that I could mistake. Louis was much more suited to Rosalie than to Clémence."

"I agree with you;" and this ended the discussion, but not the anger of Monsieur de Vos.

V.

MEANTIME at Bruges the sad discord had increased. Till her illness, Madame de Vos had taken all housekeeping matters off Rosalie's hands; and now that she had no one even to consult, the young wife found her task too irksome. Her sharp temper made her servants dissatisfied and unwilling, and Louis Scherer complained bitterly of the discomfort of his home.

"If you stayed in-doors, Rosalie, and minded the house and the children, instead of parading like a peacock on the Kauter, chattering to popinjays, one might get a dinner or a supper one could eat."

At this Rosalie flew out in rebellion. "She had been brought up to be waited on. She had never done servants' work, and she was not going to begin."

"And about the Kauter," she said, pas-

sionately, "it is too bad. I may speak to Captain Delabre, or I may not; but I go to the Kauter to hear the band play, not to seek him. It is quite different from you, who go out every evening to talk to Eugénie Legros."

Louis shrugged his shoulders.

"Ma foi," he said, wearily, "I am growing tired of this, Rosalie. You are always angry when I go to see Legros; but it has never occurred to me, when I go to smoke a pipe with him, that I might also talk to his daughter. As you suggest it, I will try perhaps. Au revoir. I advise you to cultivate good temper."

But Louis Scherer did not go as usual to see his old friend. Rosalie's temper had never struck him so unfavourably as it did to-night. She had grumbled incessantly, but she had never spoken so openly. Rosalie had parted angrily from her sister, and had told Clémence that it was her visit that had stirred up strife; and though this was not true in the sense in which the poor jealous girl meant it, it was true that Louis had become more aware of his wife's ungentleness by means of the contrast she offered to Clémence. She had grown into a way of upbraiding her husband for everything he did, and yet she felt aggrieved by his want of tenderness. Louis Scherer, on this evening, did not even give himself the enjoyment of his pipe. He was deeply, thoroughly unhappy.

"And women's tempers do not improve with age," he thought. "Who could have guessed a sweet, blooming girl like Rosalie could change into such fretfulness?"

He paced up and down beside the canal. Lights in the distance twinkled among the trees, and glittered faintly on the water. Some people had stopped on the nearest bridge, and were laughing merrily.

"Why do I endure this existence?" he said moodily. "My cousin Jacques, at Brussels, has often said he would gladly exchange his clerkship for mine. I have enough for myself and for Rosalie. It is hard to leave the children, but it is better to leave them for a time; at least, anything is better than this constant strife. I will not submit to it. I will tell Rosalie my intention; then the next time she finds fault with me, I will write to Jacques."

Louis Scherer was good-tempered, and soft, and weak; but he was selfish. It did not occur to him that in himself lay a means of softening and helping the irritable temper his cold, insouciant manner fretted. He represented to himself that Rosalie was not the girl he had married. He had more to vex him than she had, and

yet he never began a quarrel, though she was so vain in manner and extravagant in dress.

"There is no doubt," said Monsieur Scherer, as he walked slowly back to his own door, "that I am an exceedingly ill-used husband." His next remark was not so true. "It is my own fault, for taking things so quietly. I will end the whole affair."

He went home, and found Rosalie sitting where he had left her. She had really been crying bitterly; but she would not let Louis guess this, and when he announced his determination, she listened in silence. Louis waited, but she did not speak; and he turned away, and went to see Legros.

Rosalie began to cry afresh. There was a tap at the door, and Captain Delabre came in. He was a fine-looking man, much taller than Louis Scherer, with a bold, swaggering air.

He seemed disturbed when he saw Madame Scherer crying.

"Madame is in sorrow," he said, awkwardly; and he sighed.

It seemed to Rosalie as if she had not fully realized her husband's unkindness till now. Louis, to whom she had given herself and her love, had actually threatened to desert her; and here was this grand gentleman—a grade higher in the army than Louis had ever been—troubled at even the sight of her grief.

Her heart felt bursting; it relieved itself in a fresh flow of sobs and tears.

The captain looked still more tender and sympathetic. He felt that he should like to punch the head of Louis Scherer.

"Pardon me, madame; may I not ask what is your sorrow?"

Rosalie's sobs grew less frequent.

"I cannot tell you, monsieur." A little quivering sob came; but she wiped her eyes, and felt ashamed of her wet face. "But—but I am the most miserable woman in the world."

"Ma foi, do not say so; it makes me too sad. But can I not make you happier?"

The Captain's voice was very soothing in its tenderness. "Ah! if Louis would only speak to me like that," she thought. "No, monsieur, no one can make me happy. My husband is angry with me, and I—here her sobs began again."

Captain Delabre took Madame Scherer's hand.

"The man who can cause grief to so fair and angel-like a being—" and then he stopped abruptly. The door had opened, and Louis Scherer stood frowning on the threshold.

Captain Delabre did not let go the hand he held. He rose with admirable coolness.

"Bon soir, madame," he said. "I am so pleased to hear better news of Madame de Vos. Ah! ça, Scherer, where did you spring from? If I were not pressed for time, I would stay and smoke a pipe with you; but, as it is, au revoir;" and he was gone before Scherer could recover himself.

Rosalie's eyes were dry at once. She looked angrily at her husband, but her heart was full of fear.

"So this is the way thou spendest the lonely evenings I hear so much of." Louis had come forward, and he stood facing his wife.

In reality, this was only the second visit of Captain Delabre; but Rosalie felt too much outraged by her husband's suspicion to answer him quietly. She got up and faced him, pale and trembling with anger.

"It is too much, Louis. For six months, at least, thou hast left me every evening; and am I to have no society or sympathy? Even on the day of the fête, because I spoke to some of my friends, thou wert angry, and I had to get home as I could."

Louis had recovered his self-possession. He spoke in a calm, stern voice, which frightened his wife a little.

"Thou art unwise to recall that day, Rosalie. In all this cold estrangement which has come between us, I have tried to avoid reproaches, perhaps because I am so weary of thine; but I was not blind at the fête. I saw thy vanity and folly, and not only with Delabre. If I left the fête alone, it was not till thou hadst twice refused to come with me. On that day, Rosalie, the choice was with thee between me and thy vanity; now I choose between thee and peace. It is useless to believe that I am necessary to the happiness of a vain, inconstant woman."

At first she had softened, but the last words brought back all her pride.

"It is too wicked," she said, passionately, speaking more to herself than to her husband. "He is to spend all his time with others, and I am to be mute and meek, and I may not even listen to a sentence from another man. No, indeed, it is true; thou art not necessary to my happiness. I cannot well be less happy than I am with thee."

"It is settled then — we separate;" but Louis lingered, and kept his eyes fixed on the head so scornfully turned away.

Rosalie shrugged her shoulders, and then she went suddenly out of the room, ran upstairs to Madame de Vos's bed-chamber, and locked herself in.

VI.

THE fat, rosy-cheeked portress tapped at the door of the nuns' parlour in the convent of the New Jerusalem.

"A note for the Sœur Marie," she said, when she had been bidden to come in.

"For the Sœur Marie?" and then a little chorus of wonder and gentle joking buzzed round the quiet, sweet-faced sister who sat busily employed in repairing a point-lace petticoat, which would be wanted for the "month of Mary."

"The Mother is in her parlour," said the portress; and she held the door open with deep respect. The Sœur Marie, spite of her humble, retiring nature, had somehow inspired all those with whom she lived with a conviction of her saintliness.

She found the head of the convent reading in a room, whitewashed, like the rest, but richer than the rest in pictures and statuettes, and other objects of religious art, loving gifts from the pupils educated in the convent. The Superior looked up from her book. She had a calm, peaceful face, not so sweet as that of the Sœur Marie, but fuller of intelligence. She took the note from the sister's hand and read it.

"Thou must go to her, my daughter." She smiled, but she looked troubled too. "Thou knowest I had always fears about our poor Rosalie. I fear this Monsieur Scherer must be worse than unkind to desert his wife and children."

"Bien, ma mère;" and then the Sœur put on the black veil she wore out of doors, and was soon on her way to the house beside the canal.

Rosalie's note to the Sœur Marie had been written impulsively in a moment of agonized remorse at having, as she thought, driven her husband away from her. In that moment all her love for Louis had come back. But she had calmed down from this mood; and when Sister Marie kissed her niece tenderly on the forehead, instead of the despairing penitent she expected, she saw Rosalie smiling, and seemingly quite indifferent. But the Sœur had lived too much among young girls to be easily deceived.

"Thou art sorrowful, Rosalie." Her niece blushed under the sweet, direct look of her truthful eyes. "What help can I give thee?"

Rosalie twisted her fingers together. She felt angry with herself, with the Sœur Marie, with everyone.

"I do not know," she said fretfully. "I hardly know now why I wrote; only it

seemed as if I must tell some one of the great wrong done me, and I could not let my father know. He would have said it was my fault, and so would the *bonne-maman*: it is always my fault with some people."

She tossed her head and laughed.

"When thou wrotest to me, it seemed as if thou wert very sorry for something." Here the *Sœur* waited a little. "What has happened, Rosalie, to make thy husband go away?"

"Thou had best ask him;" but there was such tender pity in the look that met hers that a sudden, unexpected sob came in the girl's throat. Next minute her head was on the sister's shoulder, and she was sobbing as if her heart would break.

"It's not my fault; Louis is so cold, so selfish; he is enough to break any woman's heart with his cool indifferent ways; and then because I let others talk to me and admire me — ever so little — just to sting him into being more loving — he says I am given up to vanity and folly, and he has left me."

The words came out in little broken groups between her deep-drawn sobs, but Sister Marie did not interrupt; she knew that the wound could not close while any poison lingered there.

Yet her pure soul was deeply troubled. She had thought of Rosalie as one of the sinless lambs of the convent flock, and to the *Sœur* Marie it seemed woeful that her young niece should even wish for the admiration of any man besides her husband.

"It is not my fault," said Rosalie again; and the words sounded like a question.

The good sister smiled.

"*Mon enfant*, the hardest thing to bear in life is our own blame — we are so lazy, we always try to make someone else carry it; and yet, Rosalie," she spoke more gravely, "the nature of love is to bear all for the sake of the one beloved, is it not?"

Rosalie did not understand, but she looked uneasy.

"Thou seest, my child" — the *Sœur* Marie spoke in a cheerful confiding voice, as if she were only full of quiet gossip — "we who call ourselves Christians have all got to bear our cross; is it not so? We have been shown the way to bear it, and if we will, we may strive to follow that way in every footstep; but it is useless to put our burden on others; each has his own."

Rosalie's head moved restlessly.

"There is no use, my aunt, in telling me all this. When I was at the convent even, I did not care for this sort of talk, and I like it less now. I can't understand it. I

am not *Clémence*. She has no burden, I suppose, or else she would not be so happy. Ah, there are people who have not feeling enough to be unhappy."

She spoke bitterly, and Sister Marie sighed.

"I think it is because *Clémence* carries her burden willingly that she is able to be so bright and happy. If we think of a hardship, it grows heavier."

"But I do bear — see how much I have borne," Rosalie burst forth impetuously, carried out of her sulky reserve by her desire to justify herself. "Louis has left me evening after evening, and I have not complained."

"But have you been loving to him, Rosalie? — have you borne with him? — have you shown him that his happiness is your chief care?"

Rosalie's blue eyes opened widely and suddenly. That a quiet staid religious like her Aunt Marie should sit there instructing her in the art of loving her husband, seemed almost laughable.

"Of course I love him," — here she gave a little toss of her frizzled head, — "but I should be wanting in self-respect if I were to go on being just the same when he takes no care to make me happy."

Sister Marie smiled.

"If you and Louis saw each other on opposite sides of the canal, you could not clasp hands across it, Rosalie. One of you must cross over the bridge and seek the other, must you not?"

Rosalie grew red with anger.

"I mean no disrespect, my aunt, but I told the same to *Clémence*. Single women cannot judge for us who are married. Surely thou wouldest not have me follow Louis to Brussels and ask his pardon for what is his own fault?"

"I would have thee do this: search thine own heart — thou knowest what I mean, Rosalie — and see if all blame rests with Louis; and if it does, remember those who are in the right are more ready to be reconciled than those who are in the wrong. If thou dost not write to thy husband, or go to seek him, I think thou wilt be unhappy, and sinful also."

"It is too bad — too bad!" Rosalie stamped with vexation at the sight of her aunt's serious face. "Every one is so unjust. I am always to blame."

The Sister Marie did not answer; she asked after the children, and then she got up to go away.

"I will come again if thou wishest it, my dear child," she said. "I fear I have not given comfort to-day."

"At least, I am able to make thee sure of one thing," said Rosalie; "I love Louis. I may not have told him so, but I feel it all the same, even when I am the most angry."

Sister Marie smiled again.

"But then how is he to know it? I do not think I should believe in the love of a person who spoke angrily to me. Love must show itself in deeds and words, or it cannot live. Good-bye, my dear child!"

And then she kissed Rosalie lovingly, and went back to the convent of the New Jerusalem.

"A good thing she has gone. I shall not be in a hurry to send for her again, indeed;" and Rosalie dressed herself, and went out for a walk.

She could not help seeing that her neighbours stared at her. She saw two women put their heads together and whisper, and then they looked at her with eyes full of condemnation.

"Let them," she said haughtily; and just then she came face to face with Captain Delabre. A burning flush rose in her face, she returned his greeting, and hurried on so fast that he could not find a pretext for speaking.

It was strange. Rosalie knew that her aunt, the Sœur Marie, was only a religious — a woman who, as Louis said, lived a shut-up secluded life, which deprived her of all power of judgment, and yet the Sœur's words stuck like burs. Rosalie found herself pondering them even after she went to bed that night. What was it she had said of love being shown in deeds and words?

"Love, what is this love?" thought Rosalie sleepily. "I love Louis — is not that enough? but what can the Sœur mean by showing love?"

VII.

It is a pouring wet morning. Louis Scherer sits in a café before his breakfast, listening to the drip, drip, on the verandah outside.

He has as much peace as he desires in his Brussels life, but he is not happy; there is a want at his heart which he never felt in his bachelor days.

He has just been asking himself this question over and over again. Would it not have been better, both for himself and Rosalie, if he had spent some of his evenings, at least, with her?

"The great quarrel between us was about those visits to Legros," he said: "I might have tried to be more at home. I wonder how she takes my absence;" and

then he thought of Captain Delabre, and he looked very angry.

His cousin Jacques had not been so much pleased to see him after all. He had found Louis a temporary employment, but not so congenial a post as that which Monsieur Scherer held at Bruges.

However, it was time to be at office work, and Monsieur Scherer stretched himself, yawned, and departed.

"A lady has been here," the porter said, as he passed into the office; "she seemed in a great hurry to see Monsieur, and she left this address."

A strange kind of expectation came to Louis Scherer, and he looked at the card and felt checked.

It had simply "Clémence de Vos," and the name of an hotel close by.

Louis's hand shook as he put the card in his pocket. Why had Clémence come? what tidings had she brought? He did not dare to think; he hurried on to the hotel.

Clémence came forward, and she held his hand while she spoke.

"I am come to fetch you home, Louis; I have bad news."

He could not speak — he only looked; there was shame as well as anxiety in his face.

"It is not Rosalie; she has been ill, but she is better. She would have come; but, Louis, she cannot leave home. Loulou is ill — very ill!"

"Tell me, he is not dead?" He spoke hoarsely; her pale sorrowful face had filled him with the sudden agony of a new fear. Was this mad freak of his to end in such a grief?

"No, he was living early this morning, when I started; but we must hasten, Louis, for I fear. It was a sudden attack — a kind of fit, and the doctor said I must be quick."

Louis followed mechanically, while Clémence led the way to the station; he even let her take his ticket while he stood absorbed in his fast-growing dread.

Perhaps he had not known before how the child had got twined round his heart, but it seemed as if a mighty cord were tugging there, hurrying him to Bruges.

"Oh, that I had never left him!"

Over and over again came the thought, but no words. He leaned back beside Clémence; he seemed to be listening to all she was saying, but at first he scarcely heard a syllable.

"Rosalie has been very ill," said the soft, tender voice, "oh, so ill, Louis; and they heard of her illness at the convent,

and sent for me; she is not strong yet. Louis, do you know why she wanted to get strong?"

The direct question roused him; he looked at Clémence.

"She wanted to go to you to ask you to come back, Louis; she is very sorry, and she has been ill, I think, from grief."

He did not answer; his thoughts stayed a little while with Rosalie, but the strongest feeling in Louis Scherer's heart was love for his children.

It seemed to him as if the train would never reach Bruges; and when at last they were fairly on their way to his home, his agony grew so strong that he covered his face with his hands.

The door stood open; Clémence went in and beckoned him to follow her up the stairs along the gallery into his wife's bedroom.

Rosalie was kneeling beside the bed, one arm round her child.

Loulou's eyes were closed, but he opened them and looked at his mother.

He was so pale, so very still, but his father saw the purple rings under the dark widely opened eyes.

They were fixed on his mother.

"Kiss me,"—the little voice was so faint, so weary, that it sounded far, far off to the two listeners,— "and kiss papa when he comes: he will come—dear—dear mamma." . . .

The eyes shut and opened again.

There was a little faint fluttering, and Loulou was far away—away from his mother's tears and his father's agony of sorrow, and yet closely present, praying for them, it may be, in this their sore trial. . . .

Clémence stole softly out of the room. There was silence awhile, and then the man's sorrow burst from him in deep struggling sobs.

Rosalie looked up; she had not realized that her husband had indeed come back; and in the unlooked-for joy her new sorrow was hushed. She went to him, took his hand and kissed it tenderly, then she clung to him.

"Louis, my Louis," she whispered, "forgive me, wilt thou not? I will try and love thee as well as Loulou loved."

#### VIII.

THE rainy weather has passed away; the sky is bright and clear, with just a few soft grey-tinted clouds to take hardness from its intense blue; but those days of heavy rain have robbed the lilac flowers of their bloom, and made the gouldres rose

blossoms hang their heads like a drenched mop.

But the birds in the cages sing out loudly that the rain has brought a more genial warmth into the old courtyard; and the vine leaves have also found this out, and are shaking themselves free of their brown sheaths with surprising quickness. The fountain too sparkles merrily in the sunshine, and seems to be calling for its play-fellows, the gold-fish, to disport themselves in its basin.

Clémence stands waiting in the middle of the courtyard; her mourning dress looks sad in contrast to the brightness overhead, but there is no sorrow in her sweet earnest dark eyes.

Every now and then they are turned to the arched passage with an expectant look in them.

She is not looking at Eulalie, who stands outside the window of the little sitting-room, with her arms a-kimbo, chatting with Madame de Vos. The cook of the "Ours d'Or" has evidently softened towards the visitor; she is actually instructing her at this moment on the best method of cooking chaffinches.

A sound of wheels at last rattling over the round stones of the Place, Eulalie retreats precipitately to her kitchen. It does not comport with her self-respect, that her master should find her chatting with her old foe. Madame de Vos too shuts down the window, to keep up her character as an invalid.

Clémence has gone to meet her father under the archway; he draws her hand fondly within his arm, and they come back together into the courtyard.

Clémence looks full of expectation.

"It is all right," Monsieur smiles down into her questioning eyes. "I had a long talk with Louis, and also with Rosalie. They seem very happy. The most hopeful sign about her is her loving gratitude to thee, Clémence: she says, if she is happy in this new life with Louis, she owes it all to thy unselfish love."

"Hush, my father;" but Clémence's soft eyes are full of tears.

"I am not afraid of spoiling thee, my darling," he kisses her forehead, "but I should like to know thy secret, Clémence; it could have been no easy matter to win poor froward Rosalie to feel as she now feels—that a wife is made for a husband, not a husband for a wife."

"I have no secret," laughs Clémence, softly; "I only love Rosalie dearly, and I think she believes it now."

KATHERINE C. MACQUOID.

From The Spectator.  
THE IRISH PRIESTHOOD.

THE Keogh debate is evidently over. The Government will not fix an hour for its resumption, Mr. Disraeli spoke and voted on Thursday week against adjournment, and the few private members who, either from principle, or fanaticism, or fear of constituents, are willing to recommence a discussion at once so irritating and so sterile, acknowledge themselves powerless to resist the tacit decision of the mass. The Galway Judgment is to "slide," until it comes up once more as part of the great debate which must one day be held upon the prosecution of the Bishop of Clonfert and his priests. We return, however, not indeed to the Galway Judgment, but to the point which gives that judgment all its interest for British politicians, the political attitude of the Irish Priesthood. There is no subject of Irish, or, indeed, of Imperial politics upon which it is so important that English politicians and electors should form an accurate opinion, and none upon which they are so hopelessly astray. They do not understand the most patent facts of the situation, but reason, and what is worse act, upon a preconceived theory which never was wholly true even before emancipation, and is now almost entirely false. The popular theory in England about the Irish priesthood is, we take it, this, — that Ireland is cursed with a body of men trained in Catholic seminaries, more especially Maynooth, to act as the janissaries of the Pope; that partly from the historical circumstances and partly from the unscrupulous use of spiritual terrorism, they have acquired complete power over the Catholic population, and use this power under subtle guidance from Rome — the Vatican, in many respects the silliest of Courts, is in Protestant imagination almost superhuman in its subtlety — in the interests of the Papacy, and against the interests of the heretical monarchy of the United Kingdom. A Brahmin caste, in fact, carefully instructed and perpetually renewed, guides and forces a Sudra population into paths which it would not choose, towards ends which it would not seek, for the sake of interests in which it has no share. A man named Paul Cullen, of one whom no one knows anything except that he is Cardinal, and necessarily therefore a foe of England, holds the strings of this vast conspiracy, passes orders to his Bishops, which are repassed to the parish priests, and then obeyed by the electors, who are thus formed into a

vast corporation alien from the Empire, and indeed hostile to its continuance.

This is, we believe, a fair statement of the popular English belief about the Irish priesthood, a belief perpetually cropping up, as it did in the wild enthusiasm with which Mr. James's speech was received on Thursday week, and so irresistible as to render the good government of Ireland by a popular and Protestant Assembly almost an impossibility. It is a delusion from end to end. There is not in any portion of Europe, except it be Scotland, a country where the priesthood is so little separated from the people so little above them, so entirely national, so completely swayed and governed by the popular voice, as it is in Ireland; nor is there one, unless again it be Scotland, wherein the priesthood, if it chanced to be opposed by the people, is politically so powerless. The Catholic Hierarchy of Ireland, in 1798, dreading the intrusion of French ideas, and, as we strongly suspect, soothed by promises from British statesmen which the British people would not allow them to keep, resisted the plan of insurrection, lost its whole influence, was insulted, defied, and disregarded, and is to this day regarded as to some of its members as having in that year been forsworn. Knowing that without Ireland the Catholics of England would be as powerless in the Empire as the Quakers or the Irvingites, dreading Republicanism, and horror-struck by the spiritual effect of American influence on Ireland, that hierarchy is now opposed to Home Rule in any but the most municipal form, and in every election turning on that point is bidden to stand aside, serve in the pulpit and at the altar, and let politics alone. In the most Catholic districts the priesthood united could not keep out a Protestant devoted to Home Rule except by producing a Catholic who professed the same opinion. No man in Ireland doubts that had the Church in the long agrarian war sympathized with the landlords, as might have happened if the Bishops had kept their estates, the priesthood would have been compelled to limit itself strictly to its spiritual duties, would have been as powerless to return landlords to Parliament as the French priesthood now is to return Legitimists. Why, at this very moment the Catholic landlords, the majority of whom are as sincere in their faith as the peasantry, are saying to the priesthood, saying angrily, and with something of scorn, on every grand jury throughout Ireland, that as they are hostile to

landlords they shall not interfere in politics. At this very moment it is the popular control over the priesthood which renders the enormous weight we could exercise at Rome useless for Irish purposes, because if we got the weapon, if Mr. Gladstone chose the Primate, the weapon, although in our hands, would have lost its temper. The electors, who are supposed to be so entirely in the hands of the priests, would push them aside respectfully but decisively, and go their own way, — a truth we shall yet acknowledge when we have seen the first vote under the Billot for the Home Rulers, — for the men, that is, who wish Ireland to govern herself as completely as Hungary or Norway. That the priests have on almost all occasions, with the marked exception of '98, gone with and led their flocks is true, just as it is true in Scotland — where the Geneva gown has always been in the forefront not only of political, but of secular battle for liberty as Scotchmen understand it — just as it was true in our own Puritan time, and for precisely the same reason, that the priesthood is of the people, is the most intense expression of its views, its likings, its prejudices, and above all, its hates. Drawn from the ranks of the peasantry, separately educated in Irish colleges, not admitted, like English, clergymen, into the landlord ranks, galled by social disparities, and brought intimately into contact with that most painful of all spectacles, the government of the poor by unsympathizing or rather hostile rich — a spectacle unknown in Great Britain till the recent agricultural strike — the priesthood has become, on every question but Home Rule, fanatically peasant, has supplied constantly and persistently the army of the people as against the upper class. So far are the people from specially desiring this, that they have always of themselves chosen laymen, very often Protestant laymen, for their leaders — had '48 been a success, a Protestant would have been President — have been through all their history the dupes of any laymen of genius who professed to sympathize with their views; but leaders of genius are occasional accidents, the people need a class to lead them permanently, and there has been no class at once able, visible, and faithful to their cause except the priests. The landlords, as in France, have been their enemies. The officials, who might, as in France, have been their trusted friends — as one class of them, the Chairmen, are — have under our system — a good system only where the people are

homogeneous — been selected from among their foes. The Bar, to which the people have always turned with hope, elevating popular Barristers to Parliament with childlike admiration and faith, have been in the main too self-seeking; and the literary class, which in America takes up the "natural" leadership, has been paralyzed, partly by the extreme ignorance of the people — there is no such thing even now as a great paper in Ireland — partly by the scepticism to which men trained to be critics usually tend, and partly by the radical vice of the Irish as of the French literary character, — the temptation to sacrifice even success to rhetorical brilliancy. Very few English papers can vie with the *Nation* in literary excellence, but even to Irish Catholics the *Nation* seems no safe guide. It is in default of all other leaders, leaders, "natural," or imported, or developed, that Irishmen turn to the caste which, for three hundred years, has borne with them and for them and for them all that a foreign domination, for two centuries and a half cruel beyond belief, and even now unsympathizing, could inflict. In so doing they have no doubt deepened the gulf which divides them from Englishmen — who are not so much anti-Catholic as anti-clerical, and are as impatient of Dr. Wilberforce's politics as of Dr. Manning's — but they have yielded to a necessity which English puritans and Scotch Covenanters under the same circumstances also obeyed. What does Dr. MacHale do from which Hugh Peters would have turned aside, or from which John Knox would have recoiled?

The remedy? If there is any truth whatever in all we have advanced, and have been advancing, amidst the endless misapprehensions of some of our Protestant friends, for the past five years, the remedy is revealed in the stating of the facts. Content the Irish people and you content or paralyse — put it as you will — the Irish priesthood, which is but that caste of the people which happens, for want of other leaders, to be marching in the front. We have begun this work already. Already the Land Act has given to Ireland a great body of peasant copyholders who, like the Catholic landlords above them, will decide on secular politics by secular lights, and will before long, if not driven wild by insults to their creed, discover or evolve lay leaders of their own, leaders whose objects will be neither the independence of Ireland nor the restoration of the temporal power, but perpetuity of tenure, the creation of a Civil Service

which their sons will fill, and filling become the leaders of the people, and the thorough development of Irish resources through the agency of the State. We have but to press on in our course, and the Irish priesthood will become what the French priesthood is, a caste revered and followed in everything but politics.

From The Spectator.

#### THE MEETING OF THE THREE EMPERORS.

THE three masters of Eastern and Central Europe, the Emperors of Germany, Austria, and Russia, with their Chancellors, are to meet in Berlin within a few days, and the politicians of the Continent are speculating anxiously as to the motive of such a gathering. Englishmen, and especially English journalists of the Liberal type, seem disposed to ridicule the notion that it can have any political object at all, declaring that the days of the Holy Alliance are past, and believing that in our generation nations govern themselves; but we suspect the Continentals are in the right. Great monarchs, and especially great monarchs whose interests diverge very widely, are not fond of meeting for social gossip, if only because they are apt thereby to disturb the minds of their subjects very much, and even to throw the politics of Europe into some commotion. They are much more comfortable apart, spending their holidays in watering-places like Ems, and Nice, and Ischl, where their crowns do not weigh so heavily, and they can obtain the mental relief which an interview in Berlin, with its ceremonial, and its negotiation, and its cares, will assuredly not bestow. They must be meeting for business, and as the meeting has been arranged for months, having been discussed more or less openly in April, the business must be important, and the wisacres, in trying to spell out the business, are scarcely wasting their time. Nations may be governing themselves, as the newspapers say — and on some points, such as taxation, some of them no doubt are governing themselves — but their rulers can still do much, if it be only by initiating movements in which the nations will certainly acquiesce. The three gentlemen who meet in Berlin, for example, can, if they please, agree to guarantee each other's territories, — agree, that is, not to interfere with each other territorially, and not to permit a defeat of any one of them to be followed by loss of provinces. Their

advisers would not resist that proposal, — because they must have assented to it before it was made, and their subjects would see in it a new security for their own independence; and yet, if accepted, it would beyond all question most seriously modify the policies of Europe. Such an agreement would render it almost impossible for France to attack Germany with any hope of success; for she wants Alsace and Lorraine back, not to fight Germany, then Austria, and then Russia, and then, after all, get nothing, and she would be almost forced to strive for an alliance with England and Italy. It will set Russia free to pursue her schemes in Asia, some of which may yet be of the first consequence to Great Britain; it would relieve Austria of her fear of seeing her German subjects join their kinsmen to the ruin of her power in the Valley of the Danube; and it would leave Germany free to conduct to the bitter end her warfare with the Pope. Those are very important consequences, and they might easily follow from a morning's conversation among the three Emperors, who, if not absolute, are in foreign politics so trusted by their subjects that any defensive policy they may devise will be accepted without much opposition, except from minorities like the Poles, Czechs, or German Ultramontanes, whose power would be diminished or destroyed by the agreement itself. It is possible, again, for these three gentlemen, if not to settle what is called the "Slavic question," at least to give it an entirely new character, and make any great movement in Eastern Europe very nearly impossible, by simply agreeing to the arrangement we have suggested, and they have each of them one strong reason for so doing. Russia might wish to retain a hold over Bohemia and the Slavs of Hungary, and so be able to annoy Vienna at every turn; but she purchases that pleasure at a great price, — the risk of seeing the Hapsburg start forward some fine day, as deliverer and King of ancient Poland, a policy which since the downfall of France has greatly attracted some leading Poles, one of whom recently made at Cracow a speech in that sense of which we published an analysis. Austria, on the other hand, may like to be sure of an internal ally in her contest with Russia for the mouths of the Danube, but she purchases that reserved power dearly, if Czech and Slav are encouraged to look to St. Petersburg as the ultimate capital of a Pan-Slavic Empire, an empire which would attract to it all in Eastern Europe who are not Germans, or Magyars, or Moslem.

And Germany, though she might like to keep her hands free to operate in any direction — for example, to attract Holland into the federation, and so gain ships, colonies, and commerce at a blow — purchases her freedom dearly at the price of her liability to a combined attack from the West and the East at the same time. Each Power, therefore, has some strong and definite interest in an agreement which it is quite open to the three Sovereigns to make, which two at least of their advisers, Prince Bismarck and Count Andrassy, are understood earnestly to desire, and which is not of a kind that the remainder of Europe could resolutely attack. It would threaten nobody immediately, and if it did, while England continues to approve the policy of isolation, Kaiser William may fairly say to his brother Monarchs, "Now we three have said it, it skills not much who'er impugns our doom." The agreement would not, like the old Holy Alliance, threaten liberty — except in Poland, — for no monarch now asks external guarantees against his own people; nor would it greatly anger the Revolution, which, if no nearer its end in consequence, would be no further from it, might indeed be a little nearer, in consequence of the increased attention the Germans, relieved from their fear of invasion, would pay to their internal affairs. There is, in fact, no force anywhere to resist such an alliance, except in the West, where France by herself is powerless, and England, which might make her powerful, is intent upon ends with which the politics of the Continent have no immediate connection.

It is quite possible that a league such as we have indicated might be arranged by the Sovereigns to be present at this meeting, and quite certain that the meeting, therefore, whether or not it be followed by consequences, is a most important event, but Europe has still to discover whether the Sovereigns concerned are willing to arrange it. Count Andrassy, according to the *Eastern Budget*, which is a semi-official Austrian journal, thinks they will be, but there are some obstacles to be removed before foreign observers can share in his opinion. Of the three Sovereigns concerned, one gains everything, while the two others will be asked under the agree-

ment suggested to give up a great deal, and may when the actual moment arrives be unwilling to give it up. The Emperor of Germany, it may be said, gives up nothing, for he is guaranteed in possession of Alsace and Lorraine, and has at present no desire for further acquisition of territory, not wanting more Catholic subjects yet awhile. But the Czar must give up his chance of weakening his gigantic neighbour by French aid; that is his best chance of securing Constantinople, an object which he could not abandon without danger to his Crown, his subjects desiring that possession even more than he does. He cannot agree to guarantee Germany and attack Germany, cannot make friends with Austria, and at the same time lay his hand upon the throat of the Empire, the mouth of the great river which drains it from end to end. He must in fact remain very much where he is, that is to say, shut out from the Mediterranean, and hemmed in on the West by powerful empires, from which he is protected only by a treaty, which they may observe and probably will, but also may not. He gains no new security except a promise. So also the Kaiser of Austria must give up a great deal — his chance, should war arise between Berlin and Paris, of securing the coveted Principalities, or of re-entering Germany, or, as might happen, of securing the Catholic States of the South for his own dominion. In a war such as that between Germany and France would be, heavy prices would be paid for alliances, and all things might be possible to the victor's allies. He must, moreover, forego finally all dream of the ancient crown, a dream very dear to the House of Hapsburg, and submit to see the Papacy reduced to terms, without obtaining in return any guarantee that if, after the French danger has disappeared, the treaty is ever broken, his subjects may not elect to join their prosperous and powerful brethren of the North, and so make Germany safe against all Europe combined. He will have, Catholic, Hapsburg, and defeated soldier as he is, to surrender much, and may, when the crisis comes at last, be unable to descend, as he will think, so many steps in the scale of the world.